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Coaching Teachers on Instruction: Developing Instructional Leadership Capacity within a Principal Preparation Program

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COACHING TEACHERS ON INSTRUCTION: DEVELOPING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP CAPACITY WITHIN A PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAM

by

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ABSTRACT

Over the last several decades, the role of the school site principal has shifted from a focus on school management to one on school leadership. Integral to this new focus is the ability of the principal to be an instructional leader, tasked with improving the instructional practices of teachers. Many principal preparation programs have adopted new methods to support aspiring school leaders including the development of effective coaching skills. This qualitative study examined one principal preparation program designed with this goal in mind.

The primary research questions that guided this study were: (a) How does the coaching program support the development of coaching skills for aspiring school leaders?, (b) What factors challenged the development of coaching skills for aspiring school leaders?, and (c) What impact did the coaching program have on the aspiring school leaders' perspectives of instructional leadership? The methods used in this study included interviews with aspiring school leaders and document analysis of concept maps constructed by the participants displaying their conceptual understanding of instructional leadership, before and after they received the program's coaching instruction. Observations of the leadership course and analysis of videotapes that recorded the coaching activities of the aspiring school leaders with teachers were also conducted.

This research found that: (a) the coaching program supported the aspiring school leaders' development of coaching skills, (b) the development of the aspiring school leaders was limited by certain aspects of the coaching program, and (c) the coaching program challenged, but did not necessarily change the aspiring school leaders' perspectives of coaching and instructional leadership.

Since coaching is recognized as an effective method of individualizing and differentiating professional development for teachers, the actual practice of coaching teachers on instruction offers opportunities for aspiring school leaders to develop their capacities for leadership in 21st Century schools. The findings in this study suggest that coaching programs offer the opportunity for this development and warrant future consideration in the development of instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders within principal preparation programs.

DEDICATION

To my wife, Jennifer

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Chapter One

Introduction

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, this century's foremost reform movement for the American education system, places a major emphasis on having highly-qualified teachers in the classroom (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Along with changes to the preparation of teachers before they enter the profession, NCLB also calls for improvements to the professional development of teachers already within the profession as a means to improve the quality of teachers (Birman, Boyle, Le Floch, Elledge, Holtzman, Song, et al., 2009; U.S. Department of Education, 2002; 2003; 2011). Guskey (2002b) refers to professional development practices as "systematic efforts to bring about change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the learning outcomes of students" (p. 381). The key factor in professional development is the intended outcome of building teacher capacity in order to raise student achievement.

According to the literature in this field, the professional development of teachers is one of the most effective methods of improving teacher quality, teacher practice, and student learning (Birman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000; Colbert, Brown, Choi, & Thomas, 2008; Desimone, 2011; Eun, 2008; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Guskey, 2002b; Mundry, 2005; Oja, 1990; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000). The federal government believes so strongly in the link between the professional development of teachers and increases in student achievement that it provides billions of dollars in annual federal funds towards this cause (Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; U.S. Department of Education, 2011). Through

legislation and funding, policymakers are establishing a premise that the professional development of teachers is a key element for raising student achievement levels.

One of the key factors in the professional development of teachers is the role of the school site administrator, who is tasked with the role of instructional leader on a school campus (Darling-Hammond, Meyerson, LaPointe, & Orr, 2010; Dufour, 1991; Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Engelking, 2008; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Lynch, 2012; Nidus & Sadder, 2011; Reames, 2010; Robertson, 2008; Zepeda, 2005). Instructional leadership, according to Grogan and Andrews (2002), is about "facilitating the development of both the intellectual (what teachers know) and professional (what teachers can do) capital of the instructional staff within each school" (p. 242). Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) suggests that instructional leaders "develop and evaluate curriculum, use data to diagnose the learning needs of students, serve as a coach and mentor to teachers, and plan professional development" (p. 54). Glickman (2002) writes that when leaders work on instruction with teachers, the process is about "finding out what structures, formats, and observations best support the growth of individual competence, improved student learning, and overall school success" (p. 93). The development of this capacity for instructional leadership is thus a warranted focus for principal preparation programs.

Background to the Study

The Educational Leadership Development Academy (ELDA) at the University of San Diego's School of Leadership and Education Sciences is a principal preparation program "designed to produce and build a pool of high quality principals and instructional leaders who can successfully lead the improvement of instruction in their

schools" (Educational Leadership Development Academy, 2012). The two year program prepares students for a California Preliminary Administrative Services Credential through "university coursework, district mentoring and professional development, and personalized apprenticeship to an exemplary principal" (Educational Leadership Development Academy, 2012). Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) cited ELDA as one of the nation's most exemplary principal preparation programs, as it "emphasizes instructional leadership, organizational development, and change management, and graduates are extremely well prepared to plan and organize professional learning for teachers and staff in their schools" (p. 40).

As a part of their focus on developing instructional leaders, ELDA collaborated with the University of San Diego's Department of Learning and Teaching to design and implement a coaching program centered on classroom instruction (Hubbard & Franey, 2012). The coaching program was designed to have the aspiring school leaders from ELDA coach teacher candidates from the Department of Learning and Teaching on their instruction. The two-fold goal of this program was to build the aspiring school leaders' instructional leadership capacity and the teacher candidates' instructional practice through the coaching. In the Fall of 2011, this newly developed coaching program was piloted with a single pairing of one aspiring school leader and one teacher candidate (Hubbard & Franey, 2012). The details of the pilot study by Hubbard and Franey (2012) on this initial implementation are discussed in the methodology chapter. However, it is important to note that the inclusion of this coaching program within the ELDA program coursework signified the department's perception that learning how to coach teachers on instruction could positively impact the development of aspiring school leaders'

instructional leadership capacity and their ability to provide leadership in terms of the professional development of teachers.

Problem Statement

Professional development practices and programs for teachers generally fall into two broad categories of structure: traditional and reform (Colbert et al., 2008; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Lee, 2005; Porter, Garet, Desimone, Yoon, & Birman, 2000; Sparks, 2004). The traditional structure of professional development for teachers is a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, where all teachers, regardless of their differences, are provided the same professional development (Colbert et al., 2008; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Lee, 2005; Little, 1993; Marsh & Jordan-Marsh, 1985). Traditional forms of professional development include beginning-of-the-year motivational speakers (Hirsh, 2009a; Kelleher, 2003), short workshops (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Garet et al., 2001; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Hirsh, 2009a; Kelleher, 2003; Lee, 2005; Lester, 2003; Richardson, 2003; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000), bringing in outside experts (Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Hirsh, 2009b; Little, 1993; Sparks, Nowakowski, Hall, Alec, & Imrick, 1985), and skill training (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Little, 1993). Colbert et al. (2008) refer to this form of professional development as "the 'sit and get' model, which imposes professional development on teachers in a top-down, non-collaborative manner" (p. 136). The research of Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos (2009b) found that "more than 9 out of 10 U.S. teachers have participated in professional learning consisting of short-term conferences or workshops" (p. 5). Despite the popularity and common use of traditional forms of professional development in school districts across the nation, these forms are heavily criticized in the

literature on professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2005, 2010; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009b; Garet et al., 2001; Hirsh, 2009a; Kelleher, 2003; Lester, 2003; Little, 1993; Richardson, 2003; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000).

This criticism is based on the idea that in traditional 'one-size-fits-all' approaches, all teachers receive the same professional development program regardless of their individual subject area, grade level, level of experience, or needs. Watts (1980) equated this to a generic antibiotic that is given to all patients regardless of their illness or even if they are ill at all. A major issue in this 'one-size-fits-all' approach is that although teachers share a common link with regard to their overall profession as a teacher, they represent a diverse spectrum of ages, experience levels, subjects and grade levels taught, personalities, and ethnicities. The literature on human development suggests that individuals represent multiple levels and stages of adult development (Erikson, 1980; Kegan, 1982; Wilber, 2000; 2001), as well as teacher and career development (Fuller, 1969; Burden, 1982; Burke, Fessler, & Christensen, 1984; Christensen, Burke, Fessler, & Hagstrom, 1983); Dubble, 1998; Katz, 1972; Watts, 1980). Additionally, when teachers participate in professional development practices, they come with a propensity for particular, individual adult learning processes (Chickering, 2006; Cranton & King, 2003; Daley, 2003; Grow, 1994; Lawler, 2003; Lieberman, 1995; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007; Quick, Holtzman, & Chaney, 2009; Trotter, 2006). Due to this diversity in developmental levels and adult learning processes, for professional development to be more effective, it should be individualized and differentiated to fit their needs and developmental levels (Burden, 1982; Burke et al., 1984; Christensen et

al. 1983; Daley, 2003; Dubble, 1998; Eun, 2008; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Guskey, 1991; Helsing, Howell, Kegan, & Lahey, 2008; Lawler, 2003; Lynn, 2002; McDonnell, Christensen, & Price, 1989; Oja, 1990; Quick et al., 2009; Sheerer, 1997; Trotter, 2006; U.S. Department of Education, 2011; Watts, 1980; Zepeda, 2008). This ideal of individualized and differentiated professional development for teachers is typically not addressed within traditional forms of professional development.

Individualized and differentiated learning processes factor heavily into pedagogical approaches in terms of student learning in the school system, where the needs of student learners are recognized and addressed in daily lesson plans. However, when the education of the teachers themselves is provided in traditional professional development practices this notion of individualization and differentiation seems at times to be forgotten. In recent years, however, traditional forms of professional development are beginning to be replaced by reform styles of professional development that factor in the individual needs and developmental levels of the teachers. These reform style professional development practices include collaboration between teachers and professional learning communities (Dufour, 2004; Dufour, Dufour, Eaker, & Karhanek, 2004; Zepeda, 2008), job-embedded practices (Croft, Coggshall, Dolan, Powers, & Killion, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Zepeda, 2008), coaching and mentoring (Dantonio, 2001; Fullan & Knight, 2011; Garet et al., 2001; Hanson & Moir, 2008; Lee, 2005; Showers & Joyce, 1996; Zepeda, 2008), lesson study groups (Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Garet et al., 2001; Lee, 2005; Zepeda, 2008), and networking (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Lee, 2005; Zepeda, 2008). These reform style professional development practices are effectively shifting the focus of professional development

away from large-scale district programs and onto the individual needs and goals of teachers and school site teams.

If the development of teachers is going to move away from large scale one-size-fits-all models to differentiated individual or small group practices in order to more effectively individualize developmental opportunities, then the role of the principal as an instructional leader is increasingly more important. Principal instructional leadership is based on the assumption that the development of teachers' instructional capacity can be accomplished through the design and strategies implemented by school leadership, the supervision of instruction, the development of curriculum, and building best practices for teachers (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010). The ultimate goal of any instructional leadership practice is to increase student achievement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Reames, 2010; Robertson, 2008). Instructional leadership at the school site level commonly falls under the role of the principal or school site administrator, for they are apt to understand and acknowledge the individual needs of their teaching staff as opposed to district-wide professional development practices aimed at the 'greater good.' Although the importance of instructional leadership is well-known in the education system, actual instructional leadership is often limited in implementation in two major ways.

The first limitation is in the preparation of principals before they enter the field as principal preparation programs often inadequately prepare principals to take on this role of instructional leadership (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Murphy, 2006). Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) state that what is lacking in principal preparation programs are "principles of effective teaching and learning, the design of

instruction and professional development, organizational design of schools that promote teacher and student learning, and the requirements of building communities across diverse school stakeholders" (p. 10). An additional problem in the preparation of future principals to be instructional leaders is the lack of clinical experiences where they are in *real* classrooms working with *real* teachers (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Murphy, 2006; Reames, 2010). Clinical experiences in schools provide the opportunity for future principals to put into practice or try out what they have learned in their program, thus connecting theory and practice. A lack of opportunity to implement what they have learned in their preparation programs has often limited the overall effectiveness of their ability to be instructional leaders.

The perspectives and mental models of educational stakeholders regarding the role of a principal in classrooms is the second limitation to instructional leadership practices. Senge (2006) defines mental models as "deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action" (p. 8). According to Senge, these mental models limit a person's ability to accept new ideas "because they conflict with deeply held internal images of how the world works, images that limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting" (p. 163). One of the key aspects of instructional leadership is the observation and supervision of a teacher's instructional practice (Dufour, 1991; Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Engelking, 2008; Lynch, 2012; Zepeda, 2005). However, many stakeholders in the education system, including principals and teachers, have a mental model in place that recognizes a principal's observation of a teacher's instruction as an evaluation (Dufour, 1991; Zepeda, 2005). This perspective suggests that the principal is there to observe the

'right vs. wrong' and 'good vs. bad' in a teacher's instructional practice and classroom management. As Dufour (1991) points out, traditionally "staff development and teacher observation/assessment have been regarded as separate processes in most schools" (p. 73). This common view of observation as a strategy for evaluating teachers limits the opportunity for observation to be used as a tool for developing instructional practice, thus limiting the ability of the principal to fulfill the role of instructional leader. If principals are to fulfill the role of instructional leadership on school sites, there is a need to transform not only the preparation of future principals, but the mental models of these future principals that instructional leadership is possible.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to develop a better understanding of the development of instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders. If professional development practices are to shift from a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to a more effective modēl of individualized and differentiated practices based on individual and school needs, it will be necessary to prepare aspiring school leaders to not only take on the role of instructional leadership, but to see instructional leadership through new perspectives. The ELDA coaching program is designed with this point in mind. The focus of the coaching program is on the development of instructional leadership capacity through the clinical practice of coaching teachers on their instructional practice.

This qualitative research case study focused on the ELDA coaching program and its role in aspiring school leaders' development of instructional coaching skills as a means to develop their capacity for instructional leadership. This research investigated the ELDA coaching program through three questions:

1) How does the coaching program support the development of coaching skills for aspiring school leaders?
2) What factors challenged the development of coaching skills for aspiring school leaders?
3) What impact did the coaching program have on the aspiring school leaders' perspectives of instructional leadership?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to provide a better understanding of how to develop the instructional leadership capacity of aspiring school leaders. Current researchers recognize instructional leadership as an effective means to improve teacher instruction and raise student achievement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Grogan & Andrews, 2002). As the literature suggests, the development of this capacity is a necessary addition to principal preparation programs so as to develop school leaders rather than managers (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Levine, 2005; Murphy, 2006; Reames, 2010). Since this coaching program is based on the elements of effective instructional leadership practice including observational skills, the ability to provide feedback through questions and suggestions, and providing a differentiated developmental experience for the teacher through a focus on best practices for instruction, this study offers the opportunity to understand how a focus on these elements in professional development can affect the capacity of principals to become instructional leaders.

Since the study is focused on a single case – the ELDA coaching program – there are inherent benefits for this particular coaching program as the findings in this study can

be used formatively to make changes and modifications to future iterations of the program. However, Berg (2009) theorizes that: "when case studies are properly undertaken, they should not only fit the specific individual, group, or event studied but also generally provide understanding about similar individuals, groups, and events" (p. 330). The significance of this study is more than just an investigation into a single coaching program, as this study offers a deeper understanding of how to build coaching capacity within principal preparation programs more generally. The significance of this study is built on its addition to the literature on the preparation of school leaders to be actively engaged in instructional leadership. Additionally, this study provides an examination of the development of coaching skills as a part of a principal preparation program, which is absent in the literature on the preparation of future school leaders. This study will provide a lens into the development of instructional leadership capacity through a program that puts learning and theory into practice within a principal preparation program.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

The literature on K-12 education recognizes the professional development of teachers as a key method for increasing the academic achievement of students. However, not all professional development practices and programs are created equally, nor are they all effective in terms of raising student achievement. The following review of literature delineates the various constructs of effective professional development with particular attention given to the need for individualization and differentiation in professional development practices.

The literature also suggests the integral role that school site principals have as instructional leaders tasked with the development of instructional practice for teachers. Within this chapter, the literature on instructional leadership and the development of this capacity within principal preparation programs was also examined. Since instructional coaching is the central feature of the ELDA coaching program, this chapter examines the constructs of coaching. This will enable a deeper understanding of coaching as an individualized and differentiated professional developmental tool.

The Professional Development of Teachers

According to the literature on K-12 education, the professional development of teachers is one of the most effective methods of improving teacher quality, teacher practice, and student learning (Birman, et al., 2000; Colbert et al., 2008; Desimone, 2011; Eun, 2008; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Guskey, 2002b; Mundry, 2005; Oja, 1990; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000). The major issue in the professional development of teachers is that the

type of practices and programs espoused by research on professional development often are not what is actually implemented in school districts (Hill, 2009; Jaquith, Mindich, & Wei, 2011; Kelleher, 2003; Richardson, 2003; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007). The professional development of teachers is pointed to as the key method of impacting student learning. This section examines the literature on the professional development of teachers in order to build a framework for understanding how coaching can be an effective tool in this development.

Current constructs of professional development. As a leading voice in the professional development of teachers, the Learning Forward organization, formerly known as the National Staff Development Council, has established standards for effective professional development which call for the use of learning communities, leadership, resources, data, learning designs, implementation, and learning outcomes (Hirsh, 2009b; Learning Forward, 2011). These standards are more fully illustrated in the Learning Forward's twelve common pathways for professional development policy making (Killion & Davin, 2009). According to Killion and Davin (2009), these pathways are:

> Standards-based professional development; time dedicated to professional development; budget that supports professional development; state policy/professional development for licensure/relicensure; teacher decision making about professional development; flexible designs for professional development; professional learning communities; support for National Board Certification; mentoring/induction; individual professional development plans; career paths/teacher leadership; and compensation/recognition for professional development. (p. 20)

The key constructs offered by Learning Forward are similar to the constructs of other experts in the field.

One of the most heavily cited studies on the constructs of effective professional development is a study of a national probability sample of 1,027 teachers in 358 school districts conducted by Garet et al. (2001) and Porter et al. (2000). This study examined the impact of the funding provided by the Eisenhower Professional Development Program. From the data, three "structural" features and three "core" features were found to be evident in effective professional development practices. According to Porter et al., the effect is stronger if the professional development has these six dimensions of quality:

> The professional development is a reform rather than traditional type, is sustained over time, involves groups of teachers from the same school, provides opportunities for active learning, is coherent with other reforms and teachers' activities, and is focused on specific content and teaching strategies. (p. ES-10)

This study of the impact of the Eisenhower Professional Development Program is referenced in numerous articles within the literature on professional development for teachers. For example, Quick et al. (2009) used the six dimensions of Garet et al. and Porter et al. as a framework for a study of professional development in the San Diego City Schools district. Conducting case studies of nine elementary schools through interviews with teachers and administrators and the analysis of professional development logs, Quick et al. also found key constructs for effective professional development. Their findings included collaboration, time, modeling opportunities, safe environment, focus on content, and coherence to school goals and teacher needs.

An examination of the literature around these key constructs is needed in order to better understand what constitutes effective professional development to understand the placement of principal/teacher coaching relationships as a means of professional development. Thus, the following sections will look at professional development through the constructs suggested by the previous articles – Garet et al., 2001; Learning Forward, 2011; Porter et al., 2000; Quick et al., 2009 – and other literature within the field. The constructs examined are: (a) the structure of professional development programs, (b) the planning process for professional development, (c) time, duration and follow-up in professional development, (d) the coherence of professional development to school and district needs and goals, (e) collaboration within professional development, and (f) the evaluation of professional development.

The structure of professional development. A singular, common, 'cookie-cutter' structure for professional development programs does not exist. The differences in structure within professional development generally fall into two broad categories of structure: traditional and reform (Colbert et al., 2008; Garet et al., 2001; Lee, 2005; Porter et al., 2000; Sparks, 2004). Traditional forms of professional development include 'one-size-fits-all' approaches (Colbert et al., 2008; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Lee, 2005; Little, 1993; Marsh & Jordan-Marsh, 1985), beginning-of-the-year motivational speakers (Hirsh, 2009a; Kelleher, 2003), short workshops (Darling-Hammond, 2005, 2010; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009b; Garet et al., 2001; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Hirsh, 2009a; Kelleher, 2003; Lee, 2005; Lester, 2003; Richardson, 2003; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000), bringing in outside experts (Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Hirsh, 2009b; Little, 1993; Sparks, et al., 1985), and skill training (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Little, 1993).

Reform style professional development includes partnerships with universities (Engstrom & Danielson, 2006; Hirsh, 2009b; Lee, 2005; Little, 1993; Sparks et al., 1985), study groups (Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Garet et al., 2001; Lee, 2005; Zepeda, 2008), networking (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Lee, 2005; Zepeda, 2008), collaborations between teachers (Dufour, 2004; Dufour et al., 2004; Zepeda, 2008), job-embedded practices (Croft et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Zepeda, 2008), coaching/mentoring (Dantonio, 2001; Fullan & Knight, 2011; Garet et al., 2001; Hanson & Moir, 2008; Lee, 2005; Showers & Joyce, 1996; Zepeda, 2008), and active learning approaches (Birman et al, 2009).

The traditional forms of professional development are the most popular and most common structure for the professional development of teachers. It is suggested by Colbert et al. (2008) that before the implementation of the No Child Left Behind legislation, districts were actually changing professional practices from traditional to reform structures. However, Colbert et al. point out that "the 'sit and get' model, which imposes professional development on teachers in a top-down, non-collaborative manner" (p. 136) has returned due to the focus on standardization in NCLB. The research of Darling-Hammond et al. (2009b) found that "more than 9 out of 10 U.S. teachers have participated in professional learning consisting of short-term conferences or workshops" (p. 5). In a survey study of 454 teachers participating in the GLOBE international earth-science professional development program, Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, and Gallagher (2007) found that 54% of those teachers were participating in traditional forms of professional development.

In another study, Birman et al. (2009) analyzed the results of the Study of State Implementation of Accountability and Teacher Quality Under NCLB. They looked at performance data and documents as well as interviews with administrators across all fifty states, and the National Longitudinal Study of NCLB, which surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,500 schools across 300 school districts. The analysis by Birman et al. found that 82% of teachers had participated in "at least one formal, course-like professional development activity (e.g., conferences, institutes, series of connected workshops, courses, and internships)" (p. 107). One of the major reasons for the over-abundance of traditional forms of professional development is that they tend to be more cost-effective than reform styles (Birman et al., 2000; Little, 1993). Providing individualized professional development programs or even long-term professional development requires more resources, which proves difficult for school districts facing budgetary concerns. Little (1993) writes that another difficulty with reform style professional development is that they "are conceptually and pragmatically messier" (p. 142). It is simply easier for a school district to plan and implement a 'one-size-fits-all' professional development program for its teachers.

The traditional structure of professional development, and in particular the 'one-size-fits-all' short workshop, is heavily criticized in the literature on professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2005, 2010; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009b; Garet et al., 2001; Hirsh, 2009a; Kelleher, 2003; Knight, 2007; Lester, 2003; Richardson, 2003; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000). Watts (1980) equated this to a generic antibiotic that is given to all patients no matter what their illness is or even if they are ill at all. This approach does not address the individual needs, learning

processes, and developmental levels of teachers. Little (1993) criticizes traditional professional development because it "introduces largely standardized content to individuals whose teaching experience, expertise, and settings vary widely" (p. 138). Knight (2007) warns that "the worst consequence of an overreliance on traditional forms of professional development may be that poorly designed training can erode teachers' willingness to embrace *any* new ideas" (p. 2). The one-size-fits-all approach to professional development can leave teachers feeling as though the professional development is not intended for them or does not meet their own individual needs.

Despite the criticism of these traditional forms of professional development, Penuel et al. (2007) and Guskey and Yoon (2009) argue that effectiveness should not be based solely on the type of professional development (i.e., traditional vs. reform), but rather in terms of the actual activities within the type. Both Penuel et al. and Guskey and Yoon suggest that traditional structures of professional development can be effective if they are designed with reform-style techniques and activities.

Sparks (2004) suggests that it is not about whether a professional development program follows a traditional or reform format, but rather, he focuses on the learning opportunities and activities within the program. Sparks explains that there are two tiers of professional development: "the first tier is an emerging system that advocates the development of professional community and the exercise of professional judgment" (p. 304). Within Sparks' first tier is a focus on goals, use of data, and collective work, while the second tier "is built on mandates, scripted teaching, and careful monitoring for compliance" (p. 304). According to Sparks, there is a place in the professional

development framework for both of these tiers, and that the use of either should be based on the needs of the school and the teachers.

The professional development planning process. The process for planning professional development opportunities for teachers has a major impact on the effectiveness of the professional development (Allen, 2006; Berg, Miller, & Souvanna, 2011; Birman et al, 2009; Colbert et al., 2008; Croft et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Engstrom & Danielson, 2006; Eun, 2008; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Hargreaves, 2007; Hirsh, 2009a, 2009b; Hohenbrink, Stauffer, Zigler, & Uhlenhale, 2011; Kelleher, 2003; Lawler, 2003; Lee, 2005; Lester, 2003; Mangin & Stoelinga, 2011; Porter, et al., 2000; Slavit, Nelson, & Kennedy, 2011; Sparks, 2004; Sparks et al., 1985; Trotter, 2006; Wei, Darling-Hammond, & Adamson, 2010). Hargreaves (2007) theorizes that there are five flaws related to the design and planning of professional development that limit the effectiveness of professional development. These flaws are: (a) 'presentism,' which is the focus on short term fixes to problems in the education system; (b) 'authoritarianism,' which is the top-down planning of professional development without teacher input; (c) 'commercialism,' which is the act of school districts relying on the 'big names' in professional development; (d) 'evangelism,' which focuses on the emotions of teachers by telling them that they are teaching incorrectly and thus experts are needed to fix them; and (e) 'narcissim,' which proposes that how professional development is conducted is more important than what is actually being taught or learned in the program.

Top-down, authoritative planning processes are the traditional and most common method of planning professional development for teachers (Colbert et al, 2008; Hirsh,

2009b; Sparks, 2004). Traditionally, administrators either at the school or district level are levied the power to decide what professional development is needed for their teachers. In an analysis of the 2003-04 Schools and Staffing Survey, Darling-Hammond et al. (2009b) found this was likely true. Less than half of the surveyed teachers felt they were a part of the planning process for their own professional development.

As Hirsh (2009b) points out, there are limitations to this more top-down approach due to the separation of the administrators from the school context and needs, especially at the district level. Sparks (2004) theorizes that when professional development is planned in a top-down approach, professional development programs "begin and end with top-down, highly prescriptive approaches, leaving the culture of schools untouched and teachers and students ill prepared to function much beyond the most rudimentary levels of performance" (p. 305). In the wording of U.S. government legislation on the Eisenhower Professional Development Program within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, it is suggested that professional development decisions are "best made by individuals in the schools closest to the classroom and most knowledgeable about the needs of schools and students" (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). To avoid the pitfalls of top-down decision making in the planning processes of professional development there is a need for teachers to be active participants in the planning process.

The inclusion of teachers in the planning and decision-making processes often leads to more effective professional development for teachers (Allen, 2006; Berg et al., 2011; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Engstrom & Danielson, 2006; Eun, 2008; Hargreaves, 2007; Hirsh, 2009a; Hohenbrink et al., 2011; Lawler, 2003; Lee, 2005; Lester, 2003; Mangin & Stoelinga, 2011; Porter et al., 2000; Slavit et al., 2011; Sparks et

al., 1985; Trotter, 2006). When teachers are active participants in the planning of their own professional development, coherence to school, student, and teacher needs is more likely (Colbert et al., 2008; Porter et al., 2000). Furthermore, as Porter et al. (2000) claim, teacher involvement in the planning and decision-making process "increases teachers' investment in their professional development program" (p. ES-11). In that situation, the connection between a teacher's needs, a school's needs, and students' needs within that context is there. As active members of the planning process, teachers are able to contribute their own knowledge of school and student needs in order to inform what professional development is needed. However, as Little (1993) suggests, teachers cannot be solely tasked with the planning of professional development because "teachers are typically less well positioned than district specialists or outside consultants to invoke research (or challenge it) as a warrant for action" (p. 142). Thus, there is a need for a balance of contributions between district administrators and teachers to ensure that the professional development that is planned meets the needs of not only students and teachers, but also of the district in terms of budget, resources, and overall goals.

Addressing the needs and goals of students, teachers, and the school in the planning of professional development is imperative to the overall effectiveness of the professional development. To do this, there is a need for the collection of school and student data to inform the decisions that are made regarding the needs and goals that should be addressed in the professional development program (Croft et al., 2010; Eun, 2008; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Hirsh, 2009b; Kelleher, 2003; Lee, 2005; Porter et al., 2000; Wei et al., 2010). In this NCLB era that focuses on quantifiable data and test scores, a similar trend in the planning of professional development would be relevant.

Lee (2005) calls for the use of data from teacher surveys to determine teacher needs and deficiencies in order to effectively plan professional development for them. Kelleher (2003), in prescribing a six step professional development process, places setting goals for professional development based on data as the first step in the planning process. Regardless of whether the data is used by administrators or teachers in the planning process for professional development, it is a crucial aspect of ensuring that the needs of students, teachers, and schools are being addressed in the professional development of teachers.

Coherence to school goals, needs, programs, and contexts. The connection between the goals and needs of students, teachers, and schools and the professional development of teachers is an important construct of effective professional development (Birman et al., 2000; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin 2011; Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009a, 2009b; Davidovich, 2011; Desimone, 2011; Dufour, 2004; Dufour et al., 2004; Eun, 2008; Guskey, 1991; Kelleher, 2003; Lawler, 2003; Lieberman, 1995; Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008; Little, 1993; Mundry, 2005; Murphy, 2010; Porter et al., 2000; Penuel et al., 2007; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Richardson, 2003; Quick et al., 2009; Slavit et al., 2011; Sparks, 2004; Wei et al., 2010). As mentioned in the previous section on planning professional development, the literature suggests that the coherence of student, teacher, and school needs and goals with the professional development programs provided to teachers is influential in the overall effectiveness of the professional development. Birman et al. (2000) posits that "an activity is more likely to be effective in improving teachers' knowledge and skills if it forms a coherent part of a wider set of opportunities for teacher learning and

development" (p. 31). In their study of 454 teachers in the GLOBE professional development program, Penuel et al. (2007) found that teachers had more change in their classroom practice if there was coherence between their job and their professional development.

Yet, despite the need for coherence, the National Center for Education Statistics (2001) found that only 56% of surveyed teachers in their study felt that their professional development had a moderate to great connection to other programs at their school. Birman et al. (2009) found similar results in their analysis of two national studies, as 67% of surveyed teachers thought their professional development was connected to state or district standards, and 60% thought their professional development was connected to their school improvement plan and goals. When coherence is lacking in professional development programs, Lieberman and Pointer Mace (2008) suggest that they are "often perceived by teachers as fragmented, disconnected, and irrelevant to the real problems of classroom practice" (p. 226). One method of providing coherence between professional development and school contexts is through the planning process – a point addressed in the previous section.

Another method to provide coherence is to design professional development to be subject-specific (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009a; Desimone, 2011; Hirsh, 2009a; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000; Wei et al., 2010). According to the 2008 SASS results, 70% of the teachers who had participated in content or subject-specific professional development found it to be useful or very useful (Wei et al., 2010). Subject specificity is a common method of professional development that has been increasing over time. The analysis of the national School and Staffing Survey (SASS) results by Wei et al. (2010) found that

teachers participating in professional development directly related to their content or subject had increased from 59% in 2000 to 88% in 2008. These statistics suggest that there has been an increased focus on subject-specificity in professional development over the last decade.

An additional method of connecting student, teacher, and school needs with the professional development of teachers is through the practice of embedding professional development in the teacher's job (Croft et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Desimone, 2011; Hirsh, 2009b; Kelleher, 2003; Lester, 2003; National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2007; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Wei et al., 2009). Examples of job-embedded professional development are action research, case studies, coaching, analysis of school data and student work, mentoring, portfolios, learning communities, and study groups (Croft et al., 2010). The embedding of professional development into teachers' jobs eliminates the common complaint heard from teachers that what they are doing in professional development does not connect to the realities of their jobs. Putnam and Borko (2000) explain this issue further in stating that "learning experiences outside the classroom are too removed from the day-to-day work of teaching to have a meaningful impact" (p. 5). Embedding professional development opportunities within the context of their job provides teachers the immediate connection between what they are learning and what they do on a regular basis.

Teacher collaboration during professional development. Collaborations and collective work within a school district, school site, grade level, or subject area is a method of increasing effectiveness in the professional development offered to teachers

(Birman et al., 2000; Colbert et al., 2008; Croft et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009a; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009b; Davidovich, 2011; Desimone, 2011; Dufour, 2004; Dufour et al., 2004; Engstrom & Danielson, 2006; Eun, 2008; Guskey, 1991; Hirsh, 2009b; Hohenbrink et al., 2011; Lawler, 2003; Lee, 2005; Lieberman, 1995; Little, 1993; Mundry, 2005; Murphy, 2010; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2007; Penuel et al., 2007; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Richardson, 2003; Quick et al., 2009; Sparks, 2004; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000). The history of the American education system, from the earliest notions of one-room schoolhouses, has been based on individual teachers doing their jobs within the setting of their own individual classroom. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (2011) state that due to the traditional structure of the school system "teachers are inclined to think in terms of 'my classroom,' 'my subject,' or 'my kids' " (p. 87). As Darling-Hammond (2010) writes, teachers in the U.S. typically get "about 3 to 5 hours weekly in which to plan by themselves, and they get a few 'hit-and-run' workshops after school, with little opportunity to share knowledge or improve their practice" (p. 201). In addition, teachers are provided relatively few structured opportunities to work with and talk to their colleagues about effective teaching practices (Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008; National Council on Teaching and America's Future, 2007). This individualism can be a major deterrent to the effectiveness of professional development programs meant to transform schools, teachers, and student learning outcomes.

Despite the inherent individualism of U.S. teachers and the structure of the U.S. education system, movements towards collaborative efforts for professional development are building a foundation in the modern education system. In the analysis of a nationally

representative sample survey of teachers in 1,500 schools across 300 school districts, Birman et al. (2009) found that 52% of surveyed teachers "often participated collectively in professional development" (p. 109). The research team also found that collective participation was highest at the elementary level (56%), followed by middle school (50%) and high school (41%). In the data presented by the National Center for Education Statistics (2001), 69% of teachers were participants in regular collaborations at their school site, but only 31% of these collaborations were on a weekly basis. Additionally, 53% of teachers reported participating in a common planning period with 60% of those planning periods occurring at least once per week. In direct opposition to these studies that showed growing rates of collaboration, Wei et al. (2010) found in their analysis of the 2000, 2004 and 2008 SASS, that 34% of teachers in 2000 felt there was a cooperative effort in their school, but these percentages dropped to 17% in 2004 and 16% in 2008.

Time, duration, and follow-up in professional development. An additional construct of effective professional development involves the time spent in and duration of professional development. According to the literature in this field, professional development that is sustained over a longer period of time is more effective (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009b; Desimone, 2011; Garet et al., 2001; Eun, 2008; Kelleher, 2003; Lee, 2005; Lieberman, 1995; Porter et al., 2000; Penuel et al., 2007; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000; Wei et al., 2010; Yoon et al., 2007). In their meta-analysis of studies on the impact of professional development on student achievement, Yoon et al. (2007) found that professional development lasting more than 14 hours had a significant positive impact on student achievement. In a nationally representative sample study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (2001), teachers who participated in professional

development for more than eight hours (one day) reported higher rates of improvement in their teaching due to the professional development. Furthermore, the National Center for Education Statistics study found that if professional development opportunities were held at least once a week, teachers were more likely to find that it improved their teaching than if it was held two to three times per month, once a month, or a few times a year.

The problem, despite this literature, is that short term professional development for teachers is a common practice (Birman et al., 2009; National Center for Education Statistics, 2001; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009b; Wei et al., 2010). The National Center for Education Statistics (2001) found that 73% of the teachers who had participated in professional development on classroom management, 57% of the teachers who had participated in professional development on curriculum and standards, and 59% of the teachers who participated in professional development on new teaching methods, had spent between one and eight hours (or one day) in the professional development. Porter et al. (2000) found that the teachers that they surveyed reported that the average time spent in professional development was 25 hours over the course of the previous year, with 50% of the teachers reporting that they spent less than 15 hours in professional development over that time period. These statistics demonstrate that the time spent in professional development is often short, which limits the opportunity for the learning that takes place to take hold in a teacher's instructional practice.

In the last decade, despite the literature expounding the effectiveness of long term professional development, the duration of professional development opportunities has not increased to the extent it should. Birman et al. (2009) found that during 2005-06, professional development participation in the content area of reading for more than 24

hours was 14% for elementary school teachers and 16% for secondary teachers. The percentages were even lower in the content area of mathematics as only 6% of elementary teachers and 15% of secondary teachers had participated in professional development in this content area for more than 24 hours. Further exacerbating this lack of increase in the duration of professional development can be found in the Darling-Hammond et al. (2009b) and Wei et al. (2010) analyses of the nationally representative SASS in 2004 and 2008. They found that in 2003-04, 57% of teachers had less than 16 hours of professional development in the previous year and only 23% had professional development that lasted more than four days.

The literature on effective professional development activities prescribes certain methods that can lead to a longer duration within a particular professional development opportunity. One method that is suggested is the call for long-term goals for the professional development (Guskey, 1991; Hubbard, Mehan, & Stein, 2006; Porter et al., 2000). In a study by Birman et al. (2009), only 17% of the surveyed teachers felt that their professional development was "based explicitly on what teachers had learned in earlier professional development experiences" (p. 103). If the focus of the professional development that teachers are involved in is constantly changing year to year or even throughout a school year, the teachers do not have the opportunity to delve deeper into the new learning and skills they are being introduced to. In order to counteract the occurrence of ever-changing professional development, Guskey (1991) suggests that results be assessed according to three- to five-year goals recognizing that change will be incremental. This is in stark contrast to ever-changing professional development activities that are quickly thrown out when they do not produce immediate results. Not

only does the use of long-term goals provide coherence to the school needs and goals, but there is a sense of stability in the plan for professional development.

Another method to ensure that professional development opportunities have a longer duration is to provide time for the implementation of professional development learning in the classroom (Albritton, Morganti-Fisher, O'Neill, & Yates, 2011; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009a; Guskey, 2002b; Hargreaves, 2007; Hubbard et al., 2006). Guskey (2002b) writes that professional development is "designed to initiate change in teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions" (p. 382). Guskey argues that it is not the actual professional development that brings on this change in the teachers, but rather it is the successful implementation of the new learning in their classroom setting. In Guskey's proposed 'Model of Teacher Change,' the process of change begins with the professional development that initiates changes in the classroom practice of the teacher. According to the model, the change in classroom practice affects the learning outcomes of the students in the classroom. Guskey argues that if there are successful changes in the learning outcomes, then the teacher's perspective can be transformed.

To enhance the implementation of professional development learning, there is a need for follow-up activities after the professional development learning has occurred (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009b; Guskey, 1991; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Kelleher, 2003; Knight, 2007; Little, 1993; Penuel et al., 2007; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Richardson, 2003; Sparks, 1983; Yoon et al. 2007). As Knight (2007) points out, "a great deal of professional development occurs with little follow-up, and teachers often have few, if any, opportunities to see the new practice performed in their classrooms with their

students" (p. 110). The use of follow-up activities not only provides support for teachers trying to implement new learning in their classroom practices, but it also ensures that the professional development will extend in duration throughout the school year.

One of the issues in professional development is that opportunities for learning are often recognized as stand-alone days that will have no impact on the classroom. This is evidenced in the Hubbard et al. (2006) study that found San Diego City Schools' "teachers and principals showed up at their respective professional development sessions, listened respectfully, did the activities required of them during these sessions, and then returned to their sites to continue doing much as they had always done" (p. 130). This lack of implementation is quite commonplace in traditional forms of professional development such as 'sit and get' models. Further illustrating the lack of follow-up activities in professional development for teachers are the findings of the National Center for Education Statistics (2001). This study reported that only 35% of teachers reported there was a moderate to great extent of follow-up activities in their professional development and 43% of the teachers reported that they had moderate to great support from their school administration to apply what they had learned in their professional development. These findings suggest that follow-up activities and support in the implementation process of professional development learning is needed to better support the effectiveness of professional development.

To provide opportunities for follow-up and support of professional development learning, there is a need for time to be set aside within the school day or week for regular professional development (Albritton et al., 2011; Birman et al., 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2005, 2010; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Engstrom & Danielson, 2006;

Hirsh, 2009b; Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000; Wei et al., 2009). To this point, Wei et al. (2009) state: "when time for professional development is built into teachers' working time, their learning activities can be ongoing and sustained and can focus on particular issues over time" (p. 30). Guskey and Yoon (2009) warn that it is not just about the quantity of time provided for regular professional development, but rather the quality of the time that is most important.

Evaluating, assessing, and judging professional development. The evaluation and assessment of learning within a professional development program is an important aspect of the professional development process (Desimone, 2011; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Guskey, 2002a; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Lester, 2003; Sparks et al., 1985). However, this is a step in the professional development process that is often overlooked or misconstrued. Grossman and Hirsch (2009) ascertain that, "most states do not collect or maintain information on the professional development teachers complete beyond ensuring sufficient clock hours are taken for recertification" (p. 4). A large number of the evaluations of professional development are given in the form of satisfaction surveys, with questions that focus on how teachers 'felt' about the program (Desimone, 2011; Guskey, 2002a; Kelleher, 2003; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000). Guskey (2002a) refers to this focus on "participant reactions" (p. 46) as the first level in a five level evaluation system for determining the effectiveness of professional development.

According to Guskey (2002a), this first level is the most commonly used method of evaluation, followed closely by the second level which focuses on "participant learning," or what new learning took place for teachers. Level three addresses "organizational support and change" (p. 47) and will determine whether policies and

practices at the school or district level change due to the professional development provided. Level four evaluates the "participants' use of new knowledge and skills" (p. 47) in terms of how this new knowledge is implemented in the classroom. Level five determines effectiveness through the analysis of "student learning outcomes" (p. 49), which he asserts, is "the bottom line" (p. 49). According to Guskey, levels three through five are less common, due in large part to the fact that they cannot be directly addressed at the completion of the professional development event. It is at this fifth level that one finds the opportunity to truly determine whether a professional development program is effective.

To determine the effectiveness of a professional development program, the learning that takes place needs to be connected to hard data in the form of student scores and learning (Desimone, 2011; Dufour, 2004; Dufour et al., 2004; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Guskey, 2002a; Hirsh, 2009b; Kelleher, 2003; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000; Wei et al., 2010; Yoon et al., 2007). As Desimone (2011) suggests, "the final test of the effectiveness of professional development is whether it has led to improved student learning" (p. 71). Penuel et al. (2007) state that many school districts and administrators are expecting professional development programs that come into a school to provide evidence as to the effectiveness of their program in regards to increases in student achievement levels. If increases in student achievement are the key goals for the professional development of teachers then the evaluation and assessment of the professional development in terms of increases in student achievement are key aspects of determining effectiveness. However, as Hubbard et al. (2006) point out, direct cause and

effect from professional development to increased student achievement is difficult given all of the numerous school, social, and individual factors that are involved.

The teacher as a diverse and developing adult learner. The six constructs of effective professional development addressed in the previous section focus on avoiding the 'one-size-fits-all' forms of professional development. The constructs center on the ideal that teachers are individuals who come to professional development opportunities with individual needs, goals, practices, and belief systems. However what is espoused in the literature in terms of the individualization in professional development practices is not always followed through in the implementation of professional development. Lieberman (1995) addresses this point in the following manner:

> What everyone appears to want for students – a wide array of learning opportunities that engage students in experiences, creating, and solving real problems, using their own experiences, and working with others – is for some reason denied to teachers when they are learners. (p. 591)

As Lieberman points out, it is commonplace within the education system to recognize the diversity of students in terms of individual learning processes, developmental levels, and previous knowledge and to address these differences through differentiated instruction. The same recognition, however, is not always provided to teachers within professional development programs regarding their diversity of adult learning processes and developmental levels. In so much of adult learning – to which the professional development of teachers fits – the learners are treated like "empty bottles on the assembly line, passing us by as each of us drops in a few bits of our specialty" (Gates, 1982, p. 93). The problem with this approach is that all teachers, as learners in a professional

development setting, are not exact replicas of each other, nor will they all be teaching the same subject to the same students.

Teachers represent a diverse spectrum of adult developmental levels (Beck & Cowan, 2006; Erikson, 1980; Kegan, 1982; Wilber, 2000; 2001) and teacher developmental levels (Fuller, 1969; Burden, 1982; Burke et al., 1984; Christensen et al., 1983; Dubble, 1998; Katz, 1972; Watts, 1980). The literature on professional development espouses the matching of professional development with the individual developmental stages of teachers (Burden, 1982; Burke et al., 1984; Christensen et al. 1983; Daley, 2003; Drago-Severson, 2004; Dubble, 1998; Eun, 2008; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Guskey, 1991; Helsing et al., 2008; Lawler, 2003; Lynn, 2002; McDonnell et al., 1989; Oja, 1990; Quick et al., 2009; Sheerer, 1997; Trotter, 2006; U.S. Department of Education, 2011; Watts, 1980). Professional development programs must also recognize teachers as diverse learners with individual sets of learning needs and processes (Chickering, 2006; Cranton & King, 2003; Daley, 2003; Grow, 1994; Lawler, 2003; Lieberman, 1995; Merriam et al., 2007; Quick et al., 2009; Trotter, 2006). This section provides the foundation for how coaching as a professional development method could be used to individualize and differentiate the learning process for teachers.

Theories of teacher development. The literature on teacher-specific theories of development centers on the early work of Frances Fuller (1969). Fuller developed a theory based on the stages of concern in a teacher's career, which has served as a foundation for the researchers who have followed her in this field. According to Watske (2002), Fuller theorized that teachers move through three stages of concerns: self (survival, self-adequacy, and acceptance), task (student performance and teacher duties),

and impact (social and educational impact on the system). Similar to Erikson's (1980) crisis resolution as the means to psychosocial development, Fuller theorized that a teacher could not move to the next stage of concern without first solving the concern of the previous stage (Watske, 2002). As a teacher solved the concerns at each identifiable level of development, the teacher begins to move from self-centered concerns to impact concerns of the larger system. Other theories of teacher development follow a similar pattern to Fuller's influential theory.

Similar to Fuller's (1969) theory, the majority of teacher development theories begin with a stage that is focused on survival (Burden, 1982; Burke et al., 1984; Dubble, 1998; Katz, 1972; Watts, 1980). Survival in teacher development theories is a period where teachers are focused on "maintaining classroom control, mastering content, and inspiring the admiration of supervisors" (Christensen et al. 1983, p. 4). According to Watts (1980), teachers at this developmental level are "rigid, insecure, anxious, and intimidated by students, other teachers, and their own expectations for themselves" (p. 3). Dubble (1998) refers to this stage of development as the "neonate" stage where the teacher is like a newborn that is thrust into a new environment that lacks the comfort, safety, and familiarity of the womb, which in this case is the teacher preparation program at the university level. At this point in their development they are in search of technical skills, instructional strategies, and content knowledge that can help them survive in the classroom (Burden, 1982; Christensen et al., 1983; Dubble, 1998; Katz, 1972; Watts, 1980). The theorists suggest that by the end of year one, teachers begin to exit the survival stage as they come to the realization that they can in fact survive.

The theories of teacher development suggest that as teachers move out of the survival stage, their concerns move out of a self-centered state and switch to concerns about their students (Burden, 1982; Fuller, 1969; Katz, 1972). Both Katz (1972) and Dubble (1998) refer to this stage as 'consolidation' for it involves the integration of various skills and knowledge into a consistent whole to be used in the classroom. As Dubble asserts, "the result is an integration of practice which is manifested as a natural flow in the classroom" (p. 6). It is in this stage that the theorists suggest that teachers are open to trying new methods and strategies as they no longer harbor the concern of survival.

It is in the third stage of development that some of the teacher-specific developmental theories begin to differentiate from each other. For some of the theorists, including Fuller (1969), Burden (1982), and Watts (1980), the third stage is one of mastery where the developmental process reaches its culmination. Each of these theories suggests that this mastery level occurs around the fifth year of teaching. In Fuller's stages of concern theory, teachers in this stage are concerned with the overall impact of their career as the focus shifts to their impact on the larger school system (Watske, 2002). In the individual theories of Burden and Watts, this stage for teachers is a period of comfort in their role, confidence in their abilities, and command of their classroom environment.

Whereas the theories of Burden (1982), Fuller (1969), and Watts (1980) view this stage as an ending stage of mastery, the theories of Dubble (1998), Katz (1972), and Burke et al. (1984) do not end their theories in the third stage. Both Dubble and Katz call this stage in development the renewal stage while Burke et al. refers to it as the 'career

frustration' stage which is a crucial point along the developmental process. All three theories posit that this is where teachers become tired, bored, 'burned out,' and according to Dubble (1998), are apt to teaching in a "mode of automatic pilot" (p. 6). To move past this stage in their development without burning out, a renewal process must be undertaken where new challenges and fresh perspectives are provided to the teacher.

In the various theories of teacher development, the actual development process involves a teacher solving certain fears and crises in order to develop (Dubble, 1998; Fuller, 1969; Katz, 1972; Watts, 1980). Development in the theories of Burden (1982) and Christensen et al. (1983) offer a different version of this development. Both Burden and Christensen et al. theorized that development came through changes in a teacher's job skills, knowledge, behaviors, attitudes, outlooks, and job events. The idea was that as they mastered these areas or acquired new perspectives from them, a developmental shift occurred. Each new stage is built off of the experiences and the quality of those experiences in the earlier developmental stages (Dubble, 1998). Watts (1980) suggests that "any teacher can 'get stuck' at a given stage for a time, and some teachers can get stuck indefinitely" (p. 6). This is due in large part to the fact that teacher development theories suggest that movement is not a linear process. According to teacher development theories, teachers will move up and down the developmental spectrum depending on situations and experiences they encounter during their careers (Burke et al, 1984; McDonnell et al., 1989; Watts, 1980). Examples of the situations or experiences that might move a teacher back down on the developmental spectrum are moves to new schools, moves to new grade levels or content areas, as well as career crises.

The role of systems in development. Bronfenbrenner (1979) theorized that individuals do not stand alone in their development, but rather their development is impacted by the environmental systems that surround them. His bio-ecological systems theory suggests that "human development takes place through processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects, symbols in its immediate external environment" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 996). Individuals are nested within a series of systems that they are in constant interaction with. This interaction causes the individual to impact the systems while the systems conversely impact their development.

For Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1979) the individual interacts with surrounding systems in their developmental process are the 'microsystem,' 'mesosystem,' 'exosystem,' and 'macrosystem.' In the life of a teacher, the microsystem would be the immediate family members in a home setting, the mesosystem would be the school where they work at, the exosystem would be the school district the school is located in, and the macrosystem would be the entire national education system. Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000) termed this interaction between the individual and the environment as a 'proximal process' which they define as a "transfer of energy between the developing human being and the persons, objects, and symbols in the immediate environment" (p. 118). The interaction between the individual and the systems surrounding the individual impacts the individual's developmental process.

The role of systems theory receives a similar importance in the work of Burke et al. (1984), who hypothesized that the career cycle of a teacher is impacted by both the personal environment and the organizational environment. According to Burke et al., the

factors in a teacher's personal environment are individual dispositions, family, positive critical incidents, crises, and cumulative experiences. The factors of the organizational environment that have an impact on teacher development are regulations, management style, public trust, social expectations, and professional organizations. Similar to Bronfenbrenner's theory (1977, 1979), Burke et al. theorized that the teacher influences the personal and organizational environments while these environments simultaneously influence the teacher's development. Bandura (2000) also points out the interaction between an individual and his or her environment as he writes that "people are partly the products of their environments, but by selecting, creating, and transforming their environmental circumstances they are producers of environments as well" (p. 75). According to these theories, when looking at the development of adults – in this case the professional development of teachers – it is essential to examine the interaction between the surrounding environments and the individual, for an individual learner does not stand alone in his or her development.

Addressing differences in adult learning processes. In addition to differences in the developmental levels of teachers, there are also differences in their roles as adult learners in the professional development process. As Merriam et al. (2007) writes, "just as there is no single theory that explains all of human learning, there is no single theory of adult learning" (p. 83). Teachers as adult learners are diverse, each representing an individual set of learning needs and processes (Cranton & King, 2003; Daley, 2003; Grow, 1994; Lawler, 2003; Merriam et al., 2007; Quick et al., 2009; Trotter, 2006). As Grow (1994) points out, "there is no one way to teach or learn well... different styles work for different learners in different situations" (p. 113). To further illustrate this

point, Chickering (2006) argues that processes of adult learning need to "recognize, respect, and respond to the wide-ranging individual differences among our diverse learners" (p. 11). Despite the individual needs and learning processes of adult learners, professional development for teachers is often not linked to the ways in which adults learn (Cranton & King, 2003; Daley, 2003; Lieberman, 1995). Whereas teachers are well-versed in the pedagogy of differentiation for their students' learning processes, scant attention is paid to what Knowles (1978) termed as "andragogy," or the ways in which adults learn.

Knowles (1978) shares that for many decades the belief system surrounding adult learning was based on the ways in which children learned. According to Knowles, early theorists on adult learning had "theories about the *ends* of adult education but none about the *means* of adult learning" (p. 27). He considered andragogy to be "a unified theory of adult learning" (p. 48), based on four assumptions that would change the way in which adult learning processes were addressed. The first assumption is based on 'changes in self-concept' which meant the learner was moving from a state of dependency to "one of increasing self-directedness" (p. 55). This concept was in direct opposition to the dependent states of learning in childhood. Knowles' second assumption is based on 'the role of experience' in that an adult learner "accumulates an expanding reservoir of experience that causes him to become an increasingly rich resource for learning, and at the same provides him with a broadening base to which to relate new learning" (p. 56). The third assumption is based on the 'readiness to learn' which suggests that an adult learner will be motivated to learn based on what he or she needs in order to perform successfully in life. Knowles' final assumption is based on an adult learner's 'orientation

to learning' in that adult learners "tend to have a problem-centered orientation to learning" (p. 58) as opposed to the propensity of subject-centered learning that takes place in childhood.

Based largely on the early work of Knowles (1978), a vast amount of literature addresses the current state of adult learning processes. As a leading voice on adult learning processes, Merriam et al. (2007) have found five main approaches to adult learning that address the individual learning processes of adults. These learning approaches are 'behaviorist,' 'cognitivist,' 'humanist,' 'social cognitivist,' and 'constructivist.' The behaviorist approach centers on the acts of reinforcing *good* behavior and changing *bad* behavior and is most commonly found in organizations where evaluation is based on quantifiable measures (Akdere & Conceicao, 2006). This approach is accomplished through a process where "the external environment can be arranged to produce behavioral change through the use of reinforcements that reward learners for what the teacher wants them to continue doing" (Daley, 2003, p. 24). According to Merriam et al., the behaviorist approach is the most widely used approach in education as it is the preferred method used to teach the skills, techniques, and instructional strategies that teachers use in the classroom.

Whereas the behaviorist approach focuses on behaviors, the cognitivist approach focuses on the cognitive development of the learner. In this approach, "learning involves the reorganization of experiences in order to make sense of stimuli from the environment" (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 285). It focuses entirely on the cognitive growth of the learner, but fails to address other aspects of the self. The cognitivist approach can be found in the professional development of teachers through the teaching of content

knowledge. The thought process behind the use of this approach in the professional development of teachers is that the more the teacher knows about the content he or she is teaching, the more effective his or her teaching will be.

Both the behaviorist and cognitivist approaches deserve placement in professional development practices. This is due to the fact that they provide opportunities to develop instructional practice skills and knowledge necessary for a teacher's development. This form of professional development is highly valuable for teachers in the survival stages of development, but does not support the needs of teachers at higher developmental levels (Burden, 1982; Burke et al., 1984; Katz, 1972; Watts, 1980). Cranton and King (2003) argue that professional development cannot just be about learning new skills, but "it must involve educators as whole persons – their values, beliefs, and assumptions about teaching and their ways of seeing the world" (p. 33). Teachers at higher levels of development are already competent in the basic survival needs, and are in search of learning towards a greater impact and mastery of the profession. This reliance on the behaviorist and cognitivist approaches that do not address teacher needs at higher developmental levels is one of the major inhibitors in the development of teachers. Rogers (1974) theorizes: "there should be a place for learning by the whole person, with feelings and ideas merged" (p. 103). Out of his work emerged the humanist approach, which centers on the idea that the learner controls their own growth potential and can address their own needs in the learning process (Merriam et al, 2007). Instead of focusing merely on new skills and behaviors to acquire, the humanist approach provides space for learning by the entire being.

The social cognitivist approach differs greatly from the humanist approach as it factors in both the environment and the individual learner in the learning process. In the social cognitivist approach, knowledge is built out of the interaction between the individual and the surrounding environment (Merriam et al., 2007). The social cognitivist approach places emphasis on "how a person learns a particular set of knowledge and skills, and the situation in which a person learns, become a fundamental part of what is learned" (Putnam & Borko, 2000, p. 4). Social interaction, observational learning, and social modeling are keys to the social cognitivist approach (Bandura, 2002). Bandura (2000) suggests that the adult learner in this approach is aided through three forms of agency: personal (leaner alone), proxy (instructor to learner), and collective (social environment). Bandura (2000) elucidates that although personal agency is seen as an effective means to development, it is limited because individuals cannot control the environment that surrounds them and thus there is a need for interaction with the collective.

The final approach used in adult learning for Merriam et al. (2007) is constructivism. This approach involves a process where "learners make new knowledge meaningful by linking it to previous experience and their changing environment" (Daley, 2003, p. 25). Thus knowledge is constructed through the internalization of experiences in the environment that help to rearrange and reassess previous knowledge in the individual. Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the zone of proximal development takes the constructivist approach one step farther by incorporating the social aspect of learning into it.

Although Vygotsky's work dealt entirely with the cognitive development of children, the theory behind his work can be applied to adult learning (Eun, 2008).

Vygotsky (1978) is best known for his 'zone of proximal development' which is "the distance between the actual level of development as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). The key to the zone was to provide learning that was neither too easy nor too difficult for the learner, but central to this learning process was that the learning occurred in the interaction between the learner and the person providing guidance. Eun (2008) argues that by focusing adult learning in the zone of proximal development:

> Not only does the less competent participant reach his or her potential development with the assistance of the more competent participant, but the latter also changes in his or her interactions with the former within the [zone of proximal development]. (p. 142)

The interactions offer the opportunity for the adult to build off of previous knowledge – hence, the constructiveness nature of this learning. This form of adult learning builds the development of the teacher through collaborative work with other learners and the integration of their own previous experiences, skills, and knowledge.

Summary of the professional development of teachers. As suggested by the literature on the professional development of teachers, in order to increase the effectiveness of these developmental opportunities, they must be designed and implemented to meet teachers' individualized and differentiated needs, developmental levels, learning processes, and previous experiences. However, these individual and differentiated variables, according to Watts (1980), can lead to planning issues in terms of "how to help the beginning teacher, the 'experienced teacher' (a euphemism for good),

and the in-betweener: how to minimize the sense of being overwhelmed for one, and keep the challenge for the other" (p. 3). As Watts suggests, providing individualized and differentiated professional development can be a difficult task. This is one of the integral factors leading to the traditional forms of professional development – the one-size-fits-all model.

As the instructional leaders of school sites and staffs, the principal is tasked with the design and development of the professional development for teachers (Blase & Blase, 1999; Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Helsing et al., 2008; Lynch, 2012). Despite the literature on the constructs of effective professional development that addresses teachers as differentiated individuals, the task of designing and implementing professional development is difficult for even the most experienced school leaders. In order to better understand the role of an instructional leader, especially in regards to their role in the professional development of the teachers, the following section will examine the literature on instructional leadership and the preparation of instructional leaders in principal preparation programs.

Instructional Leadership and the Modern Principal

The current emphasis on instructional leadership as a key role for school site principals is much different from the role that principals held throughout much of the history of the American education system. Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) write that this new concept of leadership for school principals "stands in sharp contrast to traditional images of school administration, which emphasize the leader's role in maintaining discipline and bureaucratic order" (p. 15). Davies (2005) defines the difference between management and leadership for educational administrators in the following manner:

> Leadership is about direction-setting and inspiring others to make the journey to a new and improved state for the school. Management is concerned with efficiently operating in the current set of circumstances and planning in the shorter term for the school. (p. 2)

Up until the mid- to late-twentieth century, school principals were tasked with the role of 'manager' of a school site, and it was only within the last couple of decades that the role of a principal has shifted to the that of 'leader' (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Engelking, 2008; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Murphy, 2006; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000).

Grogan and Andrews (2002) suggest that this change from management to leadership in terms of the principal's role did not fully take hold until the late twentieth century. Brown (2005) explained the new roles of principals as:

> Problem solvers, resource providers, instructional leaders, visionaries, and change agents who managed people, implemented policies, solved problems, and provided resources to facilitate the teaching and learning process while guiding teachers and students towards productive learning experiences. (p. 129)

According to Brown, due to this shift in roles, the principal was now "expected to demonstrate democratic rather than autocratic leadership, to be directly involved with a school's instructional program, and to communicate a school's practices and priorities of their communities" (p. 121).

The shift in the role of principal from management to leadership meant the fundamental shift in the modern-day school leader's role from building manager to instructional leader (Blase & Blase, 1999; Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Dufour, 1991;

Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Engelking, 2008; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Lynch, 2012; Nidus & Sadder, 2011; Reames, 2010; Robertson, 2008; Zepeda, 2005). According to Grogan and Andrews (2002), instructional leadership is about "facilitating the development of both the intellectual (what teachers know) and professional (what teachers can do) capital of the instructional staff within each school" (p. 242). A key factor in the role of principal as instructional leader is a focus on the development of teachers' instructional practice (Blase & Blase, 1999; Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Engelking, 2008; Helsing et al., 2008; Lynch, 2012; Zepeda, 2005). To accomplish this, instructional leadership involves the observation and supervision of teachers in practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Engelking, 2008; Lynch, 2012; Zepeda, 2005), the building of relationships with teachers centered on instructional practice (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Lynch, 2012; Zepeda, 2005), the ability to discuss teacher practice and suggest improvements (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Engelking, 2008; Lynch, 2012), and the design and implementation of professional development for teachers (Blase & Blase, 1999; Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Helsing et al., 2008; Levine, 2005; Lynch, 2012).

The intended result of these improvements in practice through instructional leadership is the expectation that there would be an improvement in student achievement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Helsing et al., 2008; Lynch, 2012; Reames, 2010; Robertson, 2008). Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) state that the school leader is the fundamental piece "in developing high-performing schools and closing the achievement gap" (p. 4). To this point, Dufour and Marzano (2011) theorize that instructional leadership represents a chain of impact that

starts with the actions of the principal, which influences and changes the actions of the teacher, which in turn impacts the student achievement. As mentioned previously from the literature on professional development, the ultimate goal of any developmental practice for teachers is to have a positive impact on the achievement of students. Thus, for instructional leadership practices to be considered effective, they must influence the achievement of students in some manner.

As evidenced in the literature, the move from management to leadership in terms of the role of the principal has been a slow process. As Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) point out, "few jobs have as diverse an array of responsibilities as the modern principalship, and any of that multitude of roles can distract administrators from their most important one: cultivating high-quality instruction" (p. 8). Due to the complexity of this role as school principal, the preparation of the school principals is crucial to the development of school leaders that can fit the role of the modern school principal as an instructional leader.

Principal preparation programs. The original focus on management as fundamental to a school site principal's role has left a lasting effect on the preparation of principals in schools of education across the nation. Murphy (2006) argues that the original focus on management of school sites caused principal preparation programs to focus solely on the development of bureaucratic management skills. Murphy further suggests that due to the recent shift in roles from management to leadership, there is a need for "redesigned models of developing school leaders" (p. 29). As Reames (2010) explains, "leadership preparation programs must be designed to meet the challenges of school improvement, not just graduate certified managers who lack the depth to lead

effective school change" (p. 440). In the context of the previous section on the changing roles of the principal from manager to leader, the necessity for change in terms of the manner in which future principals are prepared seems obvious. However as Grogan and Andrews (2002) point out, the nation's principal preparation programs "have been slow to follow this change in the conceptualization of the work of the principal" (p. 240). This is due in large part to the difficulty in changing long held perspectives within the education system. To fully understand the role that principal preparation programs have on the development of future principals, delving into the current practices and perspectives is warranted in this section.

Levine's (2005) monumental text on the preparation of school leaders pans educational administration programs across the nation. In his research of these programs, Levine found major issues in terms of the admissions criteria, curriculum in the programs, merits of the degrees conferred, and the disconnect between what was the programs and the realities of the education system. In fact, Levine argues that "educational administration programs are the weakest of all the programs at the nation's education schools" (p. 13). For Levine, the issue lies in the notion that "the typical course of study for the principalship has little to do with the job of being a principal" (p. 27). To this point, Levine found that 89% of the administrators that were surveyed in the research noted "that schools of education fail to adequately prepare their graduates to cope with classroom realities" (p. 28). In addition to this staggering percentage, 47% of the principals who filled out the surveys "characterized the curriculum of their education schools as outdated, with specific mention of textbooks, examples used in class, curriculum, professor's knowledge, and classroom practice" (p. 30). It is clear from

Levine's work, that there are issues inherent in principal preparation programs that are greatly impacting school leadership.

This point is shared by other researchers who argue that principal preparation programs are inadequately preparing principals to take on the tasks associated with instructional leadership (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Kelley & Peterson, 2002; Levine, 2005; Murphy, 2006). Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) state that what is lacking in principal preparation programs are:

> Principles of effective teaching and learning, the design of instruction and professional development, organizational design of schools that promote teacher and student learning, and the requirements of building communities across diverse school stakeholders. (p. 10)

Darling-Hammond et al. further suggest that a major issue in the development of future school leaders is the lack of consistency in terms of preparation programs' structure, learning, and techniques. Along this same suggestion, Murphy (2006) has found preparation programs to exhibit 'serious fragmentation' in regards to the areas of theory and practice.

This lack of clinical experience, where theory is put into practice, is an area of weakness in the majority of principal preparation programs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Kelley & Peterson, 2002; Lashway, 2006; Levine, 2005; Murphy, 2006; Orr, 2006; Reames, 2010). Lashway (2006) explains that "historically, policymakers have front-loaded principal development under the assumption that the necessary knowledge, skills, and values for the profession can be conveyed in university classrooms prior to any on-the-job experience" (p. 109). Lashway

furthers this point in suggested that the problem is that the 'abstract' theories that they learn in the programs are "not easily applicable to the school setting" (p. 110). Methods are needed in which the curriculum in the courses is connected to real-life practice (Reames, 2010). Grogan and Andrews (2002) suggest that this is accomplished by "thread[ing] practical experiences throughout program components" (p. 251). Without the opportunities to put into practice the new knowledge they acquire within the program, new principals lack the practical experience to implement new learning into their roles as school leaders. However, as Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) found in their national study of principal preparation programs, there is a lack of "strong clinical training components that have allowed prospective leaders to learn the many facets of their complex jobs in close collaboration with highly skilled veteran leaders" (p. 10). Thus, due to this lack of practical experience in terms of implementing what is learned, even if instructional leadership is taught to future principals, they lack the experience to put this new learning into practice.

To illustrate the constructs of effective principal preparation geared towards a focus on leadership rather than management, Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) conducted a study of eight exemplary principal preparation programs, which were selected out of a large national sample of programs. According to Darling-Hammond et al., the eight exemplary programs:

> Share a conception of instructional leadership focused on teaching and learning – one in which principals develop and evaluate curriculum, use data to diagnose the learning needs of students, serve as a coach and mentor to teachers, and plan professional development. (p. 54)

As part of the study, Darling-Hammond et al. conducted survey research with a national random sample of principals and to a group of graduates from the exemplary pre-service programs. The findings from this survey showed that the principals from the exemplary programs were more likely to be regularly involved in effective instructional leadership practices, including providing feedback on teacher instruction, working with teachers to improve instructional methods, and building professional development for improvements in teachers' instructional capacities.

The key factor in this preparation is the development of instructional leadership capacity, which entails the development of teachers' instructional practice. As Grogan and Andrews (2002) suggest, the preparation of principals "must be redesigned to reflect the collaborative instructional leader who works through transformational processes to conceptualize school-site or district leadership" (p. 250). As seen in the literature, for principals to take on the role of school leader, they must possess the capacity to be an instructional leader. According to Helsing et al. (2008), leadership capacity is not a natural, inherent capacity of leaders although many believe it is. Thus, developmental opportunities that connect practice and theory must be provided within principal preparation programs in order to develop the instructional leadership capacities of aspiring school leaders.

Summary of instructional leadership and principal preparation. In summary, modern principal preparation programs are in need of structures, practices, and techniques that provide opportunities for developing school leaders to put into action what they are learning in the programs. Only through this form of change in preparation, can the role of a principal be changed to fit the modern ideals of school leadership, as

opposed to the traditional role of management. As described in this section, the major focus of instructional leadership is on the ability to work with teachers on their instructional practices so as to positively impact the achievement of students. This includes providing professional development opportunities for teachers that represent the individualized and differentiated needs, beliefs, and developmental levels of teachers throughout the school. Additionally instructional leadership calls for principals to be connected to what is happening within the classroom, and to be able to lead and direct teachers towards best practices in instruction. One method of instructional leadership geared towards the professional development of teachers comes in the form of coaching. The following section will delineate coaching as a professional development tool that can be used by principals to fulfill the fundamental role of instructional leadership.

Coaching

Coaching, as an individualized and differentiated professional development practice, is recognized as a means to raising teacher effectiveness (Dantonio, 2001; Fullan & Knight, 2011; Knight, 2007; Reiss, 2007; Showers & Joyce, 1996; Veenman & Denessen, 2001; Zepeda, 2005). Reiss (2007) defines coaching as a 'change process' which involves "a person being moved to a higher level of competence, confidence, performance, or insight" (p. 11). Reiss's use of the term 'process' when referring to coaching is echoed throughout the literature for coaching is a process that takes time to develop (Dantonio, 2001; Guskey, 2000; Reiss, 2007; Witherspoon & White, 1996/2007). Robertson (2008) defines coaching as "a learning relationship, where participants are open to new learning, engage together as professionals equally committed

to facilitating each other's leadership learning development and wellbeing (both cognitive and affective)" (p. 4). Grant (2006) provides a similar definition:

> Coaching is a goal-oriented, solution-focused process in which the coach works with the coachee to help identify and construct possible solutions, delineate a range of goals and options, and then facilitate the development and enactment of action plans to achieve those goals. (p. 156)

It is the notion of the individualized nature of coaching that causes coaching to be an intriguing professional development practice. The idea that coaching can be developed in a manner to support the coachee's individuals needs is to Berger (2006) "one of the most exciting elements of coaching" (p. 77).

The foundation for coaching in the workplace is built on the expectation for improvement in the coachee's performance in tasks associated with his or her job (Reiss, 2007; Stern, 2004/2007; Tyson & Birnbrauer, 1983; Witherspoon & White, 1996/2007). Coaching in the workplace originally began as a 'punitive' action for those that needed help to improve their performance (Kouzes, Posner, & Biech, 2010; Western, 2008). According to Western (2008), in the original use of coaching in the workplace, "the perception was that if you were recommended, or instructed, to see a coach, you were in trouble, your performance was not up to scratch, you needed 'fixing' " (p. 99). Western ascertains that due to this role as a punitive action, coaching struggled to be accepted as an overall developmental tool in the workplace. Although punitive coaching, based often on performance or skill training, still exists in modern society, the field of coaching has branched out into other forms that are less punitive and more developmentally based. Western stresses that the skills associated with coaching are now "essential for today's

managers and leaders" (p. 101). These changes to the perspective of what coaching is about have provided the impetus for coaching to become an impactful tool for developing the capacities of individuals and organizations.

The literature on coaching suggests a number of different forms beginning with the original forms of coaching which were skill/behavior coaching (Reiss, 2007; Stern, 2004/2007; Witherspoon & White, 1996/2007) and performance coaching (Reiss, 2007; Stern, 2004; Tyson & Birnbrauer, 1983; Western, 2008; Witherspoon & White, 1996/2007). According to Western (2008), both of these forms of coaching "focus on work-based performance and often very short-term interventions. The aim is to change behaviour and enhance workplace performance" (p. 99). Although these forms of coaching have moved out of the punitive stance they began with, each comes with a certain cache of 'fixing' the individual in terms of very specific skills and behaviors in order to improve their performance.

A second form of coaching in the literature is that of executive/leadership coaching (Kilburg, 2001/2007; Kouzes et al., 2010; Levinson, 1996/2007; Peterson, 1996/2007; Reiss, 2007; Robertson, 2008; Stern, 2004/2007; Western, 2008; Witherspoon & White, 1996/2007). Stern (2004/2007) defines executive coaching as "an experiential, individualized, leadership development process that builds a leader's capability to achieve short- and long-term organizational goals" (p. 31). Crane's (2002) transformational coaching offers another form of coaching that relies on the humanistic approach to coaching. Crane defines this form of coaching as "the art of assisting people enhance their effectiveness, in a way they feel helped" (p. 31). For Crane,

transformational coaching "creates egalitarian, mutually supportive partnerships between people that transcend the traditional boss/subordinate relationship" (p. 32).

Three additional forms of coaching that are often cited in the literature, peer coaching (Dantonio, 2001; Glickman, 2002; Showers, 1985; Showers & Joyce, 1996), formative coaching (Nidus & Sadder, 2011), and cognitive coaching (Auerbach, 2006; Costa & Garmston, 1994; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000), factor heavily into coaching within the education system. Showers (1985) referred to peer coaching as "a cyclical process designed as an extension of training" (p. 44). In peer coaching, this process takes place between teachers in a collaborative relationship focused on improving instruction (Showers & Joyce, 1996). Showers and Joyce (1996) found that teachers who participate in peer coaching relationships "practiced new skills and strategies more frequently and applied them more appropriately than did their counterparts who worked alone to expand their repertoires" (p. 14). Formative coaching, which focuses on student work as the center of the coaching relationship is defined by Nidus and Sadder (2011) as "built on deep analysis of teaching and learning – and on the assumption that the ultimate purpose of improving instructional practice is to improve student achievement" (p. 31). Cognitive coaching (Auerbach, 2006; Costa & Garmston, 1994; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000) is a widely popular form of coaching developed with the education system in mind. Costa and Garmston (1994), the earliest theorists on cognitive coaching, propose that the goal in this form of coaching it to "attend to the internal thought processes of teaching as a way of improving instruction; coaches do not work to change overt behaviors. These behaviors change as a result of refined perceptions and cognitive processes" (p. 5). This form of coaching addresses the deeper meanings and perspectives of the coach and

coachee rather than focusing on the skills and behaviors shown by the coachee in practice.

Costa and Garmston (1994) have found that this form of coaching aligns closely with the need to individualize coaching for teachers in order to:

> Understand the diverse stages in which each staff member is currently operating; to assist people in understanding their own and others' differences and stages of development; to accept staff members at their present moral, social, cognitive, and ego state; and to act in a nonjudgmental manner. (p. 7)

It is in this quote from Costa and Garmston, that the benefits of coaching as a professional development tool can be recognized. Regardless of whether the coaching approach is based on performance, or skills, or knowledge, or perspectives, the idea that coaching can be individualized and differentiated not only for the organization, but for the individual as well, is the key to the effectiveness of coaching as a developmental tool.

The constructs of effective coaching. Across these many forms of coaching, some key elements exist that denote coaching as a developmental tool. These constructs of effectiveness for coaching will be examined in further detail in the following sections.

Building a relationship between coach and coachee. The first construct of effectiveness pertains to the building of a relationship between the coach and coachee (Crane, 2002; Dantonio, 2001; Kilburg, 2001/2007; Knight, 2007; Kouzes et al., 2010; Peterson, 1996/2007; Portner, 2008; Stober, 2006; Stowell, 1988; Tyson & Birnbrauer, 1983). The literature suggests that the building of a relationship between the coach and the coachee is of fundamental importance. Portner (2008) theorizes that for a coachee to enter into a coaching situation, "it takes trust to ask for help, to expose your insecurities

and inexperience to a coworker, and to leave yourself vulnerable and open to ridicule" (p. 16). This is of extreme importance in coaching relationships between a supervisor and an employee. Without the trusting relationship, the employee (in this case the coachee) will not trust that they can open up about their deficiencies for fear of it being used in evaluation.

Dialogue between coach and coachee. Associated with this need for a relationship is the second construct of effectiveness which is the effective use of dialogue between the coach and coachee (Crane, 2002; Guskey, 2000; Drago-Severson, 2004; Knight, 2007; Kouzes et al., 2010; Stowell, 1988; Tyson & Birnbrauer, 1983). Dialogue is formed out of a trusting relationship between two individuals who respect each other as professionals and as people. Drago-Severson (2004) refers to this form of dialogue as a 'collegial inquiry' or "a shared dialogue in a reflective context that involves reflecting on one's assumptions, convictions, and values as part of the learning process" (p. 103). The direct opposite of dialogue is the relationship where one person tells the other person what they are doing wrong and what they need to do to fix it. Crane (2002) refers to this as a 'command-and-control style' which "may create stability, predictability, and uniformity, but they do not bring about deeper commitment and creative problem solving" (p. 101). As Acheson and Gall (1997) suggest, in a coaching situation, the supervisor should "listen more, talk less" (p. 161). Effective dialogue is not a one-sided affair, but rather a committed conversation between two people who share goals for the conversation.

Asking questions to the coachee. An additional key construct of coaching is the coach's action of asking questions rather than telling the coachee what to do (Crane,

2002; Portner, 2008; Robertson, 2008). According to Crane (2002), when a coach tells the coachee what they did right or wrong, or what they should to do fix issues, this action "tends to control conversation, shuts off the flow of ideas and may trigger combativeness or other forms of self-protection" (p. 100). Crane believes that questioning does the complete opposite as it allows the coachee to open up and to be reflective on their practice. But it is not just about asking questions in general for Crane, as he offers the stipulation that the questions should be asked in a manner that is "specifically designed to elicit [the] coachee's points of view" (p. 80). This idea of stimulating reflectiveness in the coachee is echoed throughout the literature as a key aspect of asking questions in the coaching process (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Portner, 2008). For Costa & Garmston (1994), the ability of the coach to ask questions about the decisions, actions, and perspectives of the coachee allows for the coachee to begin to ask themselves the same questions and examine their own work, outside of the coaching process.

Providing feedback to the coachee. Another key construct of effectiveness in coaching is the providing of feedback to the coachee (Crane, 2002; Kouzes et al., 2010; Portner, 2008; Robertson, 2008; Stowell, 1988; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Zepeda, 2005). Crane (2002) defines feedback as an action that "provides information from the environment about how the individuals and groups are performing in terms of their goals" (p. 67). According to the literature, effective feedback in a coaching relationship should be timely (Crane, 2002; Veenman & Denessen, 2001; Zepeda, 2005). This refers to the notion that feedback should follow up shortly after the observation of the coachee's behaviors or actions. Effective feedback should also be concrete and specific about observable behaviors and actions (Crane, 2002; Portner, 2008; Veenman & Denessen,

2001; Zepeda, 2005). Additionally the feedback should be limited to a small amount of items (Veenman & Denessen, 2001) and it should be on items that the coachee can actually address in future behavior and actions (Portner, 2008). The final aspect of effective feedback is that it should be descriptive rather than evaluative in nature (Crane, 2002; Portner, 2008). To this point, a coach's feedback and actions must be non-judgmental in regards to the coachee's performance (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Crane, 2002; Portner, 2008; Reiss, 2007; Robertson, 2008; Stowell, 1988; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000). Crane considers this a critical element of coaching. Costa & Garmston (1994) argue that the coaching process "is not one which the 'superior' does to the 'inferior'; rather they are two dedicated professionals striving to solve problems, improve learning, and make curriculum more vibrant" (p. 50). Costa and Garmston solidify this argument in suggesting that the goal of coaching should be that the teacher is able to judge his or her own behaviors, actions, and perspectives rather than having it judged by another person.

Development of the coachee's self-reflectiveness. The point Costa and Garmston (1994) are making in their argument is that the ultimate goal of the coaching process should be to develop self-reflectiveness in the coachee, which is reinforced throughout the literature on essential constructs of coaching (Crane, 2002; Dantonio, 2001; Drago-Severson, 2004; Knight, 2007; Portner, 2008; Robertson, 2008). Portner (2008) posits that coaching should be about building the 'self-reliant' teacher "who is willing and able to "(a) generate and choose purposefully from among viable alternatives, (b) act upon those choices, (c) monitor and reflect upon the consequences of applying those choices, and (d) modify and adjust in order to enhance student learning" (p. 45). Dantonio (2001)

writes that this act of self-reflectiveness allows for the teacher to reflect on his or her own behaviors, actions, plans, and practices in terms of their impact on students. Stober (2006) argues that it is the push for what he refers to as 'self-actualization' or movement through a 'growth process' that sets coaching apart from other relationships that only offer "general encouragement and advice giving" (p. 18). It is about gradually moving the coachee away from the dependence on others and into the ability to self-reflect and grow as an individual which follows the ideals set forth by Knowles' (1978) andragogy.

The connection between coaching and clinical supervision. As demonstrated in the previous section, coaching processes can be found throughout a wide spectrum of organizations. In the organizational realm of educational school sites, when a coaching process is conducted between a principal and a teacher, it closely resembles the process of 'clinical supervision' (Dufour, 1991; Glickman, 2002; Goldhammer, 1969; Nolan, Hawkes, & Francis, 1993; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Veenman & Denessen, 2001). Sullivan and Glanz (2000) describe clinical supervision as a method to which "teaching could be improved by a prescribed, formal process of collaboration between teacher and supervisor" (p. 19). The purpose of clinical supervision is for the principal to assist teachers in their development of instructional practices, skills, and techniques used in the classroom (Dufour, 1991; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Zepeda, 2005). Pajak (1993) writes that early theorists in the field of clinical supervision considered it to be "a democratic, dialogic enterprise that encourages teachers to consider alternatives and select their behaviors rationally on the basis of probable impact on students" (p. 22). This form of supervision based on developing teacher's instructional practice is far removed from the early beginnings of principal supervisory practice in the American education system.

According to Sullivan and Glanz (2000), early supervisory tactics were enacted through "bureaucratic inspectional-type supervision" (p. 22). The authors contribute this form of supervision to leading management theory of the early twentieth century and in particular, Fredrick Taylor's (1916) principles of scientific management. Within this form of management, according to Sergiovanni and Starratt (1998) "control, accountability, and efficiency are emphasized... within an atmosphere of clear-cut manager-subordinate relationships" (p. 12). This form of supervision places the emphasis on teacher accountability and efficiency and is the root of current evaluative supervisory practices (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000). The principal's role was not about helping teachers develop into better teachers, but rather to judge teachers in terms of their ability and efficiency.

The democratic supervision pioneered by Goldhammer (1969) served as an emergent move away from the bureaucratic supervision standards towards a more developmental stance (Pajak, 1993; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000). As Sergiovanni and Starratt (1998) point out, the new form of democratic supervision, or what they refer to as 'human relations supervision,' was based on the idea "that the productivity of workers could be increased by meeting their social needs at work, providing them with opportunities to interact with each other, treating them decently, and involving them in the decision-making process" (p. 13). Pajak (1993) refers to these changes in supervision as moves towards 'developmental/reflective approaches' where supervisors look "to influence the thinking processes and sensitivities of teachers in order to help them to improve" (p. 10). The key change was that teachers were not be looked at as replaceable

pieces in a mechanized organization like Taylor's (1916) scientific management principles, but rather as human beings with unique developmental needs, abilities, etc.

The key to clinical supervision is that it is not a method of bureaucratic supervision that passes judgment on the teachers, but rather it is a system aimed at developing the teacher workforce. Goldhammer (1969) theorizes: "supervision which increases [the] teacher's dependency upon [the] supervisor to know whether his teaching is good or bad, that is, supervision in which [the] supervisor's unexamined value judgments predominate, is bad supervision" (p. 63). This focus on development rather than on passing judgment is one of the major similarities between clinical supervision and coaching in general. Other key elements of effective clinical supervision are that it is based on the observation of a teacher's instructional practice (Goldhammer, 1969; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000), providing feedback to the teacher based on the observation (Goldhammer, 1969; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Zepeda, 2005), the use of face-to-face interaction between the teacher and the principal (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Goldhammer, 1969), the focus on developing instructional practice (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Goldhammer, 1969; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000), limiting the focus of the supervision process to a couple of items (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Goldhammer, 1969; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000), and the development of a teacher's self-reflective capabilities (Dantonio, 2001; Goldhammer, 1969; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000).

Regardless of whether one uses the term of coaching or clinical supervision, this process is a professional development practice that can greatly benefit teachers. The benefits arise from the notion that it helps teachers to improve their instruction (Veenman & Denessen, 2001), to become more self-reflective and 'self-reliant' teachers (Dantonio,

2001; Drago-Severson, 2004; Portner, 2008; Veenman & Denessen, 2001) and provides feedback to teachers on their practices and perspectives (Zepeda, 2005). According to Veenman & Denessen (2001), coaching provides the teacher the tools to become "more adept at identifying areas for improvement and also implementing improvements in their instructional behaviour" (p. 386). Reiss (2007) argues for the effectiveness of coaching as a developmental tool in suggesting that "it is time for coaching to expand beyond the classroom and become *the* school improvement strategy to boost performance of everyone who touches the lives of children" (p. 7). The role that coaching has in development is fundamentally about the individualization and differentiation that it offers in the process for as Stober (2006) writes, "there are no cookie-cutter clients, nor is there a one-size-fits-all way to coach" (p. 33). Individualization and differentiation are inherent aspects of any effective coaching process.

Veenman and Denessen (2001) conducted a study of extensive coaching programs between principals and teachers in Dutch schools. Their findings suggested a positive impact on the practices and perspectives of teachers in the coaching program as teachers became "more adept at identifying areas for improvement and also implementing improvements in their instructional behavior" (p. 386). The literature suggests that coaching offers the opportunity for the building of a relationship between a school leader and a teacher that can address the individual instructional needs of a teacher and help the teacher to increase instructional effectiveness. It is this coaching process that is integral to the success of coaching as a developmental tool, for it is what sets it apart from other relationships centered on instruction through a school site. For this reason, the coaching process itself will be examined in greater detail in the following section.

The coaching process. The key factor in coaching and clinical supervision as a developmental tool is that it is a process that takes time (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Dantonio, 2001; Guskey, 2000; Reiss, 2007; Showers, 1985; Witherspoon & White, 1996/2007). The process for coaching teachers on instruction is commonly described as a three-step process that includes a pre-observation conference, observation of instruction, and post-observation conference (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Dantonio, 2001; Dufour, 1991; Nidus & Sadder, 2011; Portner, 2008; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Veenman & Denessen, 2001). Some authors suggest additional steps in the coaching process such as analysis (Goldhammer, 1969) and reflection (Dantonio, 2001; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000), while others use different names for the steps in the process. For example, Crane (2002) refers to the stages as 'foundation phase,' 'learning loop,' and 'forwarding the action.' The three step coaching process will be explained in greater detail in the following paragraphs.

The pre-observation conference. The first step in the coaching process is for the coach and teacher to meet together in a pre-observation conference. This first stage in the process is referred to as either a pre-observation conference (Goldhammer, 1969; Portner, 2008) or a planning conference (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Costa & Garmston, 1994; Dantonio, 2001; Sullivan & Glanz, 2001). For the purposes of this review of the literature, the term 'pre-observation conference' will be used in describing this stage of the coaching process. The purpose of the pre-observation conference is to begin the coaching process by opening the lines of communication and building the coaching relationship.

This stage of the process is an opportunity for the teacher to share his or her goals for the lesson that will be observed by the coach (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Dantonio, 2001). Dantonio (2001) writes that it is in this stage that the coach and the teacher "discuss the teacher's purposes for the lesson, specify and sequence the instructional events, identify problems that may arise in delivery, and determine strategies for dealing with the anticipated problems" (p. 26). The pre-observation conversation should include the coach asking clarifying or probing questions to the teacher about the upcoming lesson (Dantonio, 2001; Goldhammer, 1969; Portner, 2008) or even go through role playing scenarios based on the plans for the lesson (Goldhammer, 1969). Through each of these techniques, the teacher is provided the opportunity to work through their lesson so as to anticipate possible changes to the instruction (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Costa & Garmston, 1994; Portner, 2008) as well as to anticipate the impact of the instruction on student learning (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Dantonio, 2001; Portner, 2008). Goldhammer (1969) warns, however, that this conversation is not meant to "undermine [the teacher's] strategy for the teaching about to be undertaken" (p. 80). For Goldhammer, it is not about the coach directing the teacher towards a certain action or behavior in the lesson, but rather to let the teacher come to his or her own decision on instructional techniques or strategies.

The importance of this step in the process for Acheson and Gall (1997) is based on the idea that this stage is meant to "help the teacher identify concerns and translate them into observable behaviors" (p. 57). What is to be observed during the next stage of the process is a key element of this pre-observation conference. Not only do the teacher and coach need to schedule the observation and post-observation conference (Dantonio, 2001; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Veenman & Denessen, 2001), but they also must come to

a joint decision about what will be observed in the instruction and how it will be documented during the observation (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Costa & Garmston, 1994; Dantonio, 2001; Goldhammer, 1969; Sullivan & Glanz, 2001). This is a key aspect of the pre-observation conference for Dantonio (2001) as this provides a situation where "the coaching partners can experience the lesson with a consistent mental picture about what is to take place during the teacher's classroom delivery of the instructional plan" (p. 26). Without this agreement, the coach and teacher could have very different ideas about the goals, purposes, and outcomes of the lesson that is being observed. By being on the same page in terms of what to look for, document, and then discuss after the observation, the coaching process has a greater possibility for effective developmental change.

The observation of instruction. The second stage of the coaching process is the observation of the teacher's instruction in the classroom. The observation of the instruction should not be centered on the evaluation or judgment of the teacher's instructional practice (Dantonio, 2001; Portner, 2008; Robertson, 2008; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000). Instead, the observation should be used to provide data and feedback to the coachee in the post-observation conference. According to Guskey (2000) the observation of instruction in the classroom is a highly effective method of professional development. Guskey argues that the development occurs both by observing other teachers' instruction as well as having one's own instruction observed. Observation is a key tool in the development of practice for Goldhammer (1969) as well, for he points out that the "teacher cannot usually see the same things happening as a disengaged observer can" (p. 61). Through what Goldhammer refers to as 'adding eyes,' the teacher is provided outside perspective on his or her instruction.

According to Sullivan and Glanz (2000), both qualitative and quantitative observational techniques can be used depending on the focus of the observation. Data can be collected during the observation through a number of methods including recording devices (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Glickman, 2002; Goldhammer, 1969), taking notes (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Glickman, 2002; Goldhammer, 1969), or tally and frequency counts (Costa & Garmston, 1994). Goldhammer (1969) suggests that all of the data that is collected should represent what the observer "hears and sees as comprehensively as possible" (p. 61). The key to the collection of data during the observation, according to Dantonio (2001), is the collection of "specific, concrete information related to the observation focus that was determined by the coaching partners during the planning conference" (p. 69). This is an important aspect of the data collection during the observation, as the literature suggests that vital to the coaching process is the ability to focus in on a limited number of behaviors or actions (Dantonio, 2001; Knight, 2007; Portner, 2008). The more closely aligned this limited number of focus points for the observation to the original jointly decided plan for the lesson, the more effective the data will be to the developmental process for the teacher.

Along with what is to be observed and the amount of data that should be collected, an important facet of this step in the coaching process, is how the observer should conduct their observation. Robertson (2008) succinctly argues this point in that the observation should not be about judging the worth of the practice in terms of "good or bad, effective or ineffective" (p. 116). The literature on observations during the coaching process presents the notion that it is not about diagnosing problems or observing what is right and wrong in the teacher's instruction (Dantonio, 2001; Portner, 2008; Sullivan &

Glanz, 2000). Dantonio (2001) points out that those observational techniques belong to evaluators rather than coaches, and even hypothesizes that "if teachers perceive that information gathered during the collegial coaching process will be used for purposes of evaluation, they may feel threatened and choose not to engage in future development activities" (p. 70). In order to accomplish the correct mode of observation, the coach should focus their notes during the observation on actual observable actions and behaviors rather than making comments or inferences in the notes (Dantonio, 2001; Goldhammer, 1969). By recording in one's notes what is actually happening rather than focusing on one's thoughts on these actions, the observer can avoid the pitfalls of judgment that plague coaching relationships. The collection of data based on observable actions and behaviors provides the impetus for the next stage of the process, where the data will be used as feedback in the actual coaching of the teacher.

The post-observation conference. The final step in the process comes after the observation of the teacher's instruction in the classroom. This third step in the process is referred to in the literature as the post-observation conference (Goldhammer, 1969), reflecting conference (Costa & Garmston, 1994), debriefing conference (Dantonio, 2001), or feedback conference (Acheson & Gall, 1997). For the purposes of this review of the literature, the term 'post-observation conference' will be used in referring to this step in the process. This stage of the coaching process is where the actual coaching takes place based off of the conversation in the pre-observation conference and the observation of the teacher's instruction in the second step of the process.

The post-observation conference, according to Dantonio (2001), is the point at which the coach and teacher "explore potential ways of eliminating discrepancies

between what was anticipated and what actually occurred during instruction" (p. 80). The post-observation conversation should incorporate, especially at the onset, an opportunity for the teacher to reflect on and discuss their thoughts on the lesson that was observed (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Costa & Garmston, 1994; Dantonio, 2001). Costa and Garmston (1994) argue that by eliciting the teacher's perspective on the lesson, it provides the foundation for a conversation where "the teacher is the only participant who is judging performance or effectiveness" (p. 22). Too many times, when observation is used for evaluation rather than development of instruction, the supervisor will begin with the issues that they observed in the teacher's instruction. Not only does the teacher become defensive about his or her actions during the lesson, but Dantonio reasons that "nothing will change until the teacher comes to terms with what needs to be changed, why it needs to be changed, and how it can be changed" (p. 81). So instead of the observer going through a list of issues and problems the elicitation of the teacher's perspective allows the teacher to avoid the defensiveness that can shut down the coaching process.

Through this self-reflection by the teacher, issues or problems with the instruction come to light through the perspective of the teacher. It is the point of the process where there is "an avenue for comparing preparation with performance in the classroom" (Dantonio, 2001). Since the coach has observed the lesson that the teacher is reflecting on, he or she can now begin to coach the teacher on strategies and plans that address these issues (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Dantonio, 2001). Integral to this coaching is the use of the data collected during the observation (Goldhammer, 1969; Nidus & Sadder, 2011). Acheson and Gall (1997) write that the collected data from the observation should be

focused on what was agreed upon in the pre-observation conference, and if it is "accurate and relevant" (p. 150) then it will have an impact on the coaching process. It is at this point of the process that the actual coaching of the teacher on instruction takes center stage. To further understand what should occur in this stage of the coaching process, one should refer to the section of this literature review that directly addresses coaching.

An additional stage to develop the coach's practice. Goldhammer (1969) called for an additional stage in the process of clinical supervision to take place after the post-observation conference. According to Goldhammer, this stage is a place where "some member(s) could analyze the supervisory behavior of some other member(s) after the supervision conference was over" (p. 71). In the context of coaching teachers on instruction, this would be a place for the principal to receive coaching from other principals about his or her coaching of the teacher. As Goldhammer suggests, this stage of the process "is the time when Supervisor's practice is examined with all of the rigor and for basically the same purposes that Teacher's professional behavior was analyzed" (p. 71). Goldhammer further writes that this is an opportunity for the supervisor (or coach in the context of this study) to further develop their own skills at working with the teacher on the development of instructional practice. Although this additional stage is only addressed in the literature on clinical supervision and not the literature on coaching, its addition to this study is integral as the aspiring school leaders will be participating in a coaching of the coaches event that reflects Goldhammer's stage.

Challenges with principals coaching teachers. The previous sections have outlined the role that quality, effective coaching relationships can have as a professional development tool for teachers. However, not all of the literature fully supports this

positive notion of coaching as a tool for development. This section examines the challenges associated with principals coaching teachers.

Critiques of principals acting as instructional coaches. One major critique of the use of principal/teacher coaching processes is in regards to the lack of time that a principal has to take on this process (Dufour & Marzano, 2011). Dufour and Marzano (2011) are not opposed to principals coaching teachers, as they find the coaching of teachers to be a highly effective tool of development. Their concern is with the amount of time that it would take for a principal to effectively conduct these coaching processes with all of the teachers of a school site. The illustration provided by Dufour and Marzano of this concern is effectively constructed in the following manner:

> Assume that a well-intentioned high school principal devotes 150 hours each year to classroom walkthroughs, preobservation conferences, formal observations, postobservation conferences, write-ups, and the individual conversations associated with teacher evaluation. If the principal divides his or her time equally among a staff of fifty teachers, each teacher would have the benefit of three hours of the principal's time annually. (p. 60)

Costa and Garmston (1994) found that the benefits of coaching reach their "peak when the frequency of coaching reaches six or seven times a year" (p. 154). However, Costa and Garmston argue that this limit is very rarely reached, as most situations involve only one observation per year. The same conclusion can be reached in Dufour and Marzano's scenario. To deal with this issue of time, Dufour and Marzano suggest the use of instructional leaders from the teaching staff, to which the principal can train to be

instructional coaches for the rest of the staff. In this scenario, the amount of time would be divided down into manageable parts for a team of instructional coaches.

An additional critique of the literature on the effectiveness of coaching as a tool of development for teachers is that there is very little data to support the notion that coaching impacts student performance (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Frase, 2005). Acheson and Gall (1997) write that "the links between clinical supervision and teacher performance, and between clinical supervision and student performance, have not been convincingly demonstrated" (p. 20). Frase (2005) has come to the same conclusion that despite the intended goals of instructional supervision to improve student performance, "there is little evidence of success in attaining this purpose" (p. 432). This critique of coaching as a developmental tool for improved student performance warrants future consideration in the weighing of the effectiveness of this practice.

Another major critique is based not only on the wisdom of administrators engaging in evaluative supervision over developmental supervision, but also on state and district mandates on the subject of evaluative supervision (Frase, 2005). Frase (2005) argues that:

> Over the last 50 years, each state has enacted laws or legal codes requiring regular teacher evaluations, and the widely state purpose of this was to improve teaching. In some cases, states have gone so far as to prescribe the evaluation instrument and procedure. The result has been failure. (p. 433)

Frase writes that "some scholars and school districts ruled that the principal cannot be both an instructional leader and evaluator" (p. 434). Frase suggests that this focus on evaluation over developmental supervision is "related to supervisors' fascination with

mechanized models of management – in other words, treating people like machines" (p. 431). Despite the move in the last century away from bureaucratic supervision techniques, there is still a predominant perspective within the education system that evaluation, not development, is needed in handling teachers. It is perspectives such as this that are a key critique to the use of principal/teacher coaching processes as a developmental tool within the education system.

The impact of perspectives on the roles of a principal. The perspectives or 'mental models' (Senge, 2006) of the stakeholders, specifically those of the coach and coachee, will impact whether coaching will be effective. Senge (2006) defines mental models as "deeply engrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action" (p. 8). If principals' and teachers' mental models about the role of the principal limit supervision to a mode of evaluation, this will cause issues for the use of clinical supervision or coaching as a developmental tool for teachers. Costa and Garmston (1994) reason that this perspective of the role of supervision by principals is based on the idea that:

> For many years, supervisors were expected to install, redirect, and reinforce overt behaviors of teaching. This is compatible with the long-held metaphor of teaching as labor where management sets standards, directs how the work is to be done, monitors and reviews for compliance, and then evaluates and rewards the completed work. (p. 5)

Goldhammer (1969) wrote regarding this perspective in that "teachers generally expect supervision to be punitive, to be anchored in an 'odious system of administrative sanctions' " (p. 64). It is from this perspective that many supervisory practices are

carried out which forces undue pressures to build on the teaching staff. If teachers see the principal's role in their classroom to be one of judgment, then they are apt to be threatened and guarded in their interaction with the supervisor (Acheson & Gall, 1997). To this point, Acheson and Gall (1997) write that "a threatened teacher is likely to clam up or reveal only 'safe' concerns" (p. 64). Thus the perspective of the purpose of the supervision impacts the opportunity for it to be carried out in a coaching or developmental manner.

Summary of the Review of Literature

Integral to the effectiveness of professional development for teachers is the opportunity for individualized and differentiated professional development approaches based on their needs, experiences, and goals. More effective professional development practices offer the learning that teachers need to develop their instructional capacity, which improves the opportunity to impact the achievement of students. Instructional coaching has been established as a professional development practice that meets the criteria for effective professional development. Coaching provides the opportunity to individualize and differentiate the professional development for each teacher based on his or her needs, developmental levels, and learning processes while providing follow-up and duration in the process. This study, however, is not focused on the professional development of teachers, but rather on the instructional leaders tasked with the development of teachers.

As the literature suggests, the role of the modern-day principal has shifted from a focus on management to one on leadership. The development of teachers' instructional practice is an integral component of a principal's capacity for instructional leadership.

Instructional coaching reflects the type of leadership needed to impact a teacher's instructional practice. Coaching is a process founded in the relationship between a coach and coachee that focuses on the development of the coachee. Coaching provides the avenue for a principal to not only be connected to his or her teachers, but to have a direct impact on the instructional practices within a classroom and thus the achievement of students. As Zepeda (2005) suggests, "principals can be more effective if they know their teachers as 'learners,' just as effective teachers know when to shift instruction and learning activities to meet the individual and collective needs of students in the classroom" (p. 8). Despite the perceived merits of coaching as an instructional leadership tool for the development of the teachers, there is a lack of literature addressing this topic.

Although considerable amounts of literature focus on principal preparation programs, much of which criticizes the manner in which these programs prepare future principals, the review of literature undertaken in this study failed to locate even a single piece of literature on the development of coaching skills in principal preparation programs. This lack of literature on the topic represents a major gap in the literature on the development of future school leaders. The ELDA principal preparation program theorized that the development of coaching skills could build the instructional leadership capacities of its aspiring school leader. This study directly addresses this gap in the literature through the examination of the impact of this coaching program on the development of instructional leadership capacity for these aspiring school leaders.

Chapter Three

Methodology

The Educational Leadership Development Academy's (ELDA) coaching program was designed to focus on developing instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders through the clinical practice of coaching teachers on instruction. This qualitative research study focused on ELDA's coaching program in order to assess the impact of this program on aspiring school leaders' development of coaching skills as a means to build instructional leadership capacity. This research looked at the coaching program through three primary research questions:

1) How does the coaching program support the development of coaching skills for aspiring school leaders?
2) What factors challenged the development of coaching skills for aspiring school leaders?
3) What impact does the coaching program have on the aspiring school leaders' perspectives on instructional leadership?

The purpose of this study was to examine the ELDA coaching program and its role in building instructional leadership capacity by developing the instructional coaching skills of twelve aspiring school leaders participating in the ELDA program.

Background of the ELDA Coaching Program

As previously stated in the first chapter, the ELDA coaching program began as a joint collaboration between ELDA and the Department of Learning and Teaching at the University of San Diego's School of Leadership and Education Sciences (Hubbard &

Franey, 2012). In the fall of 2011, the coaching program was piloted with a single pairing of one aspiring school leader and one teacher candidate. The aspiring school leader and teacher candidate, each of whom voluntarily participated in the pilot implementation of the coaching program, went through a four-step coaching cycle, focused on the teacher candidate's classroom instruction. These four steps in the coaching cycle were: (a) a pre-observation conference between the aspiring school leader and the teacher candidate, (b) a lesson taught by the teacher candidate and observed by the aspiring school leader, (c) a post-observation de-briefing conference between the aspiring school leader and the teacher candidate, and (d) a coaching conference between the aspiring school leader and other ELDA aspiring school leaders, referred to as the "coaching of the coaches" event (Hubbard & Franey, 2012). The first three steps of the cycle were videotaped and then observed by a class of ELDA aspiring school leaders, of which the ELDA aspiring school leader who had coached the teacher candidate was a member. The observation of the videos became the content for the fourth step, the coaching of the coaches event, where aspiring school leaders provided feedback to their ELDA classmate to help improve his coaching ability.

Findings from the Hubbard and Franey (2012) study of this pilot implementation of the coaching program identified benefits for the teacher's development of instructional capacity because of the aspiring school leader's use of questioning, focus on instructional problems, and use of positive reinforcement in the feedback. Benefits were also noted for the aspiring school leader's development of instructional leadership capacity due to the actual practice of coaching and the coaching feedback provided by the other ELDA aspiring school leaders.

Based on the recommendations from the evaluation of the pilot implementation of the coaching program (Hubbard & Franey, 2012), ELDA moved forward in the fall semester of 2012 with an expanded version of the coaching program. This second iteration of the program included two organizational changes: (a) *all* second year ELDA aspiring school leaders enrolled in the fall semester would participate in the coaching program as a part of one of their courses and (b) the aspiring school leaders would no longer be paired with a teacher candidate from the Department of Learning and Teaching and would instead be paired with a teacher of their choice. This change in the coaching pairs was due to the difficulties associated with aligning teacher candidates' student teaching assignments with the aspiring school leaders' school sites and schedules.

The second iteration of the coaching program also meant: (a) the ELDA aspiring school leaders would be provided direct instruction on coaching during the semester which did not occur in the pilot implementation and (b) the process would include an additional second cycle of coaching for each aspiring school leader/teacher pair. Thus, whereas the cycle in the pilot implementation of the program ended after the fourth step of the cycle, the coaching of the coaches event, the new rendition of the coaching program would include an additional round of the coaching cycle. The reason for this additional coaching cycle was to enable each aspiring school leader to follow-up on the coaching in the first cycle and to be able to modify their own individual coaching to the teacher based on the feedback received from peers. The inclusion of this coaching program within the ELDA program coursework signified the department's perception that learning how to coach teachers on instruction could positively impact the

development of instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders.

The ELDA coaching program was built into the requirements of a course on instructional leadership and was designed to implement coaching cycles between an aspiring school leader and a teacher. The point of these coaching cycles was to have an aspiring school leader support a teacher in developing her instructional practice. Each aspiring school leader was tasked with choosing a teacher to work with either from her own school site where she worked, or the school site where she was doing her apprenticeship. Once the aspiring school leader had selected a teacher who would agree to be a part of the coaching program, the actual coaching took place in two cycles. It is important to note that there is a difference between the coaching program and the coaching cycles. The coaching program included all of the aspects of the ELDA course including the pedagogy, curriculum, course sessions, and the coaching cycles. The coaching cycles were only one aspect of the overall coaching program, albeit it was the central aspect of the overall program. Without the actual coaching cycles, the coaching program would not be any different than any other course on instructional leadership or instructional coaching. The actual coaching cycles are what set apart this coaching program from other principal preparation programs. Thus, it is important to explain these cycles as they were the central feature of the coaching program.

The coaching cycle involved the same four steps from the piloted version of the coaching program. The first step, the pre-observation conference, was designed as an opportunity for the aspiring school leader and the teacher to talk about the teacher's upcoming lesson that the aspiring school leader would observe. After this pre-observation conference took place, the teacher would teach a lesson in her classroom with

the aspiring school leader observing this lesson. Following the observation of instruction, the aspiring school leader and the teacher would again meet in a post-observation conference. It was at this step that the 'coaching' would take place as the aspiring school leader would help the teacher with his or her instruction based off of what had been observed in the lesson.

A key feature of the coaching program was that each of these three steps was to be videotaped by the aspiring school leader. These videotapes were then used in the fourth step of the coaching cycle, the coaching of the coaches event. In this step of the cycle, each aspiring school leader would present the videotapes from the first three steps of her coaching cycle to a group of her peers in the ELDA course. These coaching of the coaches events were intended to provide feedback and coaching to the participating aspiring school leader about the coaching she had done in the videos. Similar to the way in which the coaching of the teacher was supposed to help each teacher develop her instructional practice, the coaching of the coaches was focused on developing the aspiring school leaders' coaching skills. After the completion of this coaching of the coaches event, the aspiring school leaders went through an additional cycle of the same steps with the teacher they had coached in the first cycle. The purpose of this second cycle was to provide the aspiring school leaders an opportunity to modify their coaching based on the feedback they received from their peers, and to try the coaching again.

Site and Sample Selection

The Aspiring Leaders Program within the Educational Leadership Development Academy (ELDA) at the University of San Diego's School of Leadership and Education Sciences is a two-year cohort-based program designed for educators to earn their

California Preliminary Administrative Services Credential (Educational Leadership Development Academy, 2012). The 24-unit part-time program includes coursework and instruction at the university in the areas of human relations, school law, instructional leadership, politics, supervision, diversity, and technology. Along with the university coursework, students participate in a 'field-based residency experience' where they are an apprentice to a local school site principal (Educational Leadership Development Academy, 2012). Upon completion of the program, the aspiring school leaders are able to apply for a California Preliminary Administrative Services Credential. Additionally, graduates are able to complete an additional 12 units within the School of Leadership and Education Sciences to earn a Master's degree in Leadership Studies.

The ELDA coaching program was developed and implemented as a requirement within an ELDA course on instructional leadership. Twelve second-year ELDA aspiring school leaders (eight females and four males) were enrolled in the course. The selection of participants utilized a purposeful sampling technique intended to select participants who can provide the most relevant data to the study (Creswell, 2007; Merriam & Associates, 2002; Patton, 1990; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Thus, even though all students in the ELDA program are developing instructional leadership capacity within their coursework, what sets apart this group of students is that they were enrolled in the only course where this coaching program was taking place. This pool of aspiring school leaders offered the most relevant evidence to inform the research focused on the development of instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders through the coaching program.

In the month of August, prior to the start of the course, an email solicitation was

sent out to the twelve students enrolled in the course asking for their participation in this study (see Appendix A). As a follow-up to the email solicitation, I gave a presentation at the first session of the course to the students enrolled in the course. These solicitations yielded eight participants for the study out of a total of twelve students enrolled in the course (75%), each of whom filled out a consent form to participate in the study (see Appendix B). The four students who did not enroll as participants in the study cited time as the main reason why they could not participate.

At the beginning of the study each participant filled out a nine question demographic survey focused on gathering information about the participant (see Appendix C). Questions on this survey included inquiries into their age, gender, what teaching credentials they held, their years of teaching experience, and their previous experience with instructional coaching. These questions about their experience with coaching included one question that asked how many times they had been coached by a principal on instruction and another question that asked whether they had coached another teacher before. Thus, these questions were meant to elicit both their experience as a coach and as a coachee. Data that is presented in this section comes from the analysis of these demographic surveys.

Of the eight participants in this study, six were females and two were males, which was representative of the total course gender proportions. The average age of the eight participants was 35 years old with a range of 27 to 55 years of age. In terms of the participant's teaching experience level, the average years of experience was 12, ranging from 4 to 35 years of experience. Although the one participant had 35 years of teaching experience, the other seven participants had 12 or less years of experience, thus equating

to an average of 9 years for these seven participants. Seven of the eight participants were currently employed as teachers, with four of these seven serving in positions in the Special Education realm. Of the seven participants currently teaching at the time of the study, three taught at the elementary school level (K – 5th), two at the middle school level (6th – 8th), one at the high school level, and one at a K – 8th grade school.

Additional questions on the demographic survey asked the participants about their previous experiences with being a master teacher to a student teacher, an instructional coach for teachers, and being coached by a principal on instruction (see Appendix C). Four of the eight participants had previously worked as a master teacher for student teachers at their school site. Of the four that had this experience as a master teacher, one participant had been a master teacher once, two participants had been a master teacher twice, and one had been a master teacher for five student teachers. In terms of previous coaching experience, only two of the eight participants had coached teachers on instruction in their careers. For the purpose of this research, it was expressed to the participants that this question about coaching experience should not include their work as a master teacher. To this point, only one of the participants who had master teacher experience had also had coaching experience. The other participant who had coached a teacher previously on instruction had not been a master teacher in her career. In terms of being on the other side of the coaching partnership, that is, experience being coached by a principal on instruction, four of the eight participants reported that they had previously been coached. One of the four who had been coached by their principal noted on the survey that this coaching took part within the evaluation cycle. In general, this group of participants had very limited experience with coaching either as a coach or a coachee. To

establish a clear delineation of the collected data and findings associated with the data while protecting the anonymity of the participants in this study, the female gender will solely be used from this point forward to refer to all of the participants in this study.

Research Methods

The ELDA coaching program provides a means to examine the development of instructional leadership capacity through the development of coaching skills for aspiring school leaders, as this is the central focus of the program. This case study (Berg, 2009; Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003) was conducted using qualitative research methods (Berg, 2009; Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990). Qualitative research provides the means and methods to better understand the experiences and perspectives of the participants in the study (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 1990).

In referring to a qualitative case study in particular, Merriam (1998) writes that this form of study can be "particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic" (p. 29). For Merriam, 'particularistic' entails the centering of the study on a specific event or experience. 'Descriptive' for Merriam entails that the researcher is able to provide "a rich, 'thick' description of the phenomenon under study" (p. 29). Merriam also suggests this form of study is 'heuristic' in nature in that it can "illuminate the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under study" (p. 30). Berg (2009) writes that by using multiple methods such as observations, documents, and interviews, the researcher in a qualitative study is able to "obtain a better, more substantive picture of reality; a richer, more complete array of symbols and theoretical concepts; and a means of verifying many of these elements" (p. 5). Qualitative research provides the opportunity to delve deeply into the specific event, experience, or participants under study and to describe the

findings through a deep analysis of the meanings and perspectives at the heart of the study. An integral factor in the qualitative research approach undertaken in this study is the use of a case study approach.

Case study. Creswell (2007) defines case study research as the study of "a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information" (p. 73). The systems under study in a case study can include a phenomenon, processes, or single entities, such as individuals, institutions, or organizations (Berg, 2009; Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). According to Yin (2003), case studies "contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomena" (p. 1). Berg (2009) furthers this point in that case studies are particularly useful if "the researcher aims to uncover the manifest interaction of significant factors characteristic of this phenomenon, individual, community, or institution" (p. 318). The case in this study was the group of aspiring school leaders who were participants in the ELDA instructional leadership course. Each participant's answers were analyzed and compared across the group of aspiring school leaders for similarities, differences, and patterns that emerged regarding their experiences with the coaching program.

Data Collection

The collection of data in this study took place in three phases: (a) before the coaching cycles began, referred to in this study as the 'Pre-Coaching Phase'; (b) during the coaching cycles, referred to as the 'Coaching Phase'; and (c) after the completion of the entire coaching program, referred to as 'Post-Coaching Phase.' Splitting the data collection into three phases provided the opportunity to examine changes in coaching

practice and participants' perspectives as a result of this coaching program. The following sections will delineate the collection of data by phases.

Phase One: the Pre-Coaching Phase. The first phase of the research took place in September of 2012 just after the course began, but before the participants had begun their coaching cycles. This phase involved a one-hour research session with each participant, consisting of a concept mapping activity (Kane & Trochim, 2009; Wheeldon, 2010), a five question hypothetical-interaction interview (Spradley, 1979), and a six-question perspectives interview. The following sections provide the details of each of the three activities conducted in the Pre-Coaching Phase of the research.

Pre-Coaching Phase concept mapping. Concept mapping, which is also referred to as 'mind mapping' or 'mental mapping' in the literature, is a method of visually representing a concept or term through a series of relationships that are linked together (Buzan & Buzan, 1993; Daley, Shaw, Balistrieri, Glasenapp, & Placentine, 1999; Davies, 2011; Farrand, Hussain, & Hennessy, 2002; Kane & Trochim, 2007, 2009; Morgan, Fellows, & Guevara, 2008; Nesbit & Adesope, 2006; Novak & Gowin, 1984; Prosser & Burke, 2008; Trochim, 2001; Wheeldon, 2010). According to Prosser and Burke (2008), concept mapping is "premised on a constructivist notion of learning and on the idea that learners frame their understanding of new knowledge on preexisting beliefs" (p. 413). For Mezeske (2007) these maps go beyond 'factual knowledge' because they "require critical thinking and reflection on connections and relationships between concepts and events" (p. 20). The use of the concept map for research is based on its ability to represent a participant's sense of meaning and perspective of a concept through a

differentiated approach (Kane & Trochim, 2009; Wheeldon, 2010). Concept mapping was one of the methods utilized in this study to access the aspiring school leaders' understanding of coaching and instructional leadership. In addition to accessing their understanding, the concept maps were intended to uncover the aspiring school leaders' perspectives on coaching and instructional leadership prior to the start of their coaching cycles.

The research session that took place in the Pre-Coaching Phase of this study began with each participant constructing three of these concept maps: (a) Roles of a Principal (see Appendix D), (b) Instructional Leadership (see Appendix E), and (c) Coaching (see Appendix F). The participants were provided a single sheet of paper for each concept map, which contained only a single box at the center of the sheet of paper. The concept for that map, either 'Role of a Principal,' Instructional Leadership,' or 'Coaching' was printed in the box. I explained to each participant that there were no correct answers to this concept map, nor was there a particular way in which to fill out the map. It was explained to the participants that they were to fill out each concept map based on their thoughts and perspectives of the concept. If the participant asked a clarifying question, they were provided an answer that explained that the map could be filled out in any way that they felt represented their thoughts and perspectives on the concept.

Pre-Coaching Phase interview. Immediately following the participant's construction of the three concept maps in the Pre-Coaching Phase, an interview was conducted with the participant. The interview process in qualitative research is meant to provide the interviewee an avenue to express his or her perspectives and experiences of

topics that are important to the study (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Patton, 1990; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The interview was audio-recorded and was divided into two sections: (a) hypothetical-interaction questions (Spradley, 1979) and (b) perspectives questions.

The first section of the Pre-Coaching Phase interview contained five questions that used Spradley's (1979) hypothetical-interaction questioning technique (see Appendix G). According to Spradley, this form of questioning puts the interviewee in a hypothetical situation whereupon they can describe their actions in the situation, what might take place in the situation, or what they might hear or see if they were there. Although Spradley's work was used for an ethnographical interview with an informant, hypothetical-interaction questions were relevant to this study. Since the coaching program is focused on key facets of a principal's role as an instructional leader, delving into the aspiring school leader's understanding of these concepts at the start of the program was warranted. This provided me a baseline of the aspiring school leaders' understanding of instructional leadership and coaching so as to determine changes brought on through participation in the program. Although many researchers would simply ask for direct definitions of these key terms and concepts, Spradley suggests the implementation of his 'use principle.' In describing this principle, Spradley writes that "if we ask for meaning, we will only discover the explicit meanings, the ones that people can talk about. If we ask for use, we will tap that great reservoir of tacit meanings which exists in every culture" (p. 156). In order to move away from the definition of terms and into Spradley's 'use principle', the participants were first asked five questions posed in hypothetical situations based on the facets of instructional leadership and coaching (see Appendix G). This form of questioning removed the possibility of answers that are mere

regurgitations of what they had previously learned in ELDA courses, or definitions the aspiring school leaders might have been acquainted with from reading a text. Instead, I was able to gather the deeper meanings that the aspiring school leaders associated with these terms and concepts.

The second section of the Pre-Coaching Phase interview utilized six questions that focused on the perspectives of the aspiring school leaders in terms of instructional leadership (see Appendix G). This part of the interview was semi-structured and open-ended so as to allow me to actively probe relevant and unique paths of information that arose out of the interview process (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The use of these questions in the initial interview was to garner the perspectives of the aspiring school leaders about topics related to the coaching program. In particular these questions focused on the aspiring school leaders' thoughts about the purpose of the coaching program, how realistic coaching might be at a school site, and their expectations of the coaching program. The same six questions were asked in the Post-Coaching Phase final interview so as to examine changes in the perspectives of the participants in regards to the coaching program.

Phase Two: The Coaching Phase. The second phase of the research, referred to in this study as The Coaching Phase, took place while the aspiring school leaders were actively involved in the coaching cycles. Whereas the research in the Pre-Coaching Phase focused on the aspiring school leaders' perspectives and understanding of instructional leadership and coaching, the Coaching Phase focused on the aspiring school leaders' actual experience with instructional leadership and their coaching practices. In this phase of the research, data was collected in two methods: (a) the direct observation of

the in-class instruction on coaching provided by the course instructor to the aspiring school leaders and (b) the observation of both audio and video recordings of the coaching cycles they were engaged in.

Observation of classroom instruction. The use of observations in this stage of the research was key, for as Patton (1990) points out, observations provide "detailed descriptions of people's activities, behaviors, actions, and the full range of interpersonal interactions and organizational processes that are part of observable human experience" (p. 10). The focus of the observations for both the video and audio recordings was on the elements of the coaching program that have a role, either positively or negatively, in the development of coaching skills and instructional leadership capacity for the aspiring school leaders. In addition to this, the examination of the aspiring school leaders' use of these coaching skills within the coaching cycles provided insight into their ability to put their learning about coaching into practice.

Since more in-class instruction about coaching was one of Hubbard and Franey's (2012) recommended modifications for the course instructor's second implementation of the coaching program, the inclusion of this instruction in the data collection was considered important. This observation of the instruction on coaching was not intended for evaluative purposes of the course instructor, but rather it served as an opportunity for me to become familiar with the instruction that the aspiring school leaders received about coaching and to understand the knowledge and skills that were privileged as key components of effective coaching. My role in this phase of the research was that of Creswell's (2007) 'non-participant observer' or Berg's (2009) 'complete observer' who "is a passive observer to the flow of activities and interactions" (p. 81).

I attended all seven meetings of this course between September and December 2012 and took field notes during these observations. These notes focused on the aspects of the course instruction pertaining to coaching and instructional leadership. In particular, my notes focused on the instruction provided to the students in the course, both in terms of the content and the manner in which it was taught. In addition to this focus, I observed the interaction of the students and the instructor during class discussions on instructional leadership and coaching and noted what they were doing and saying during these discussions. The field notes were then analyzed for the impact of the coaching program on the aspiring school leaders' development.

By observing the instruction that the aspiring school leaders were receiving on how to coach teachers on instruction, I was able to build a foundation of understanding for what the instructor and students expected to happen during the observations of the coaching cycles. Being familiar with what the students read as part of the course, how they were taught coaching, and what they were taught about coaching provided a baseline from which to later understand what the aspiring school leaders chose to do during the coaching cycles. Despite the fact that the observation of the professor's instruction was not evaluated, the observations of this instruction were used to provide recommendations for future iterations of the coaching program.

Observation of coaching cycle video- and audio-tapes. Course requirements and coaching program protocol called for each aspiring school leader to videotape the steps in the coaching cycles that the aspiring school leader participated in with their coachee. These steps included the pre-observation conference between the aspiring school leader

and the classroom teacher, the aspiring school leader's observation of the classroom teacher's instruction, and the post-observation conferences. These steps of the coaching cycles were videotaped for two reasons: (a) the videos were shown to other aspiring school leaders and used as the impetus for feedback from other aspiring school leaders in the coaching of the coaches events and (b) the videos were turned into the course instructor at the end of the course for evidence of each aspiring school leader's completion of the instructional coaching requirement for the course. I observed, transcribed, and analyzed all of these videos.

Since the videotaping of each aspiring school leader's coaching cycles was a built-in aspect of the coaching program in the course, the use of the videotapes for research purposes rather than the direct observation of each aspiring school leader's coaching was relevant. This is due to the fact that the observation of the videotaped steps in the cycles removed me from the room so as to avoid the issues that Merriam (1998) warns about in writing that "participants who know they are being observed will tend to behave in socially acceptable ways and present themselves in a favorable manner" (p. 103). Although I was not in the room during videotaping, both the aspiring school leader and the classroom teacher were aware of the videotaping and that I would be viewing the videotapes. It must be noted that the awareness of the participants to my observations of their work in the course and on video carries with it the possibility that they would change their actions to fit what they perceived I was examining in this study.

Whereas the first three steps of each coaching cycle were videotaped by the aspiring school leaders, the coaching of the coaches events, which were the fourth step in the coaching cycle, were audiotaped. These events took place within the course sessions

inside the ELDA classroom. During the course sessions, as many as four different coaching of the coaches events were taking place. Although I did conduct direct observations of these coaching of the coaches events in the classroom, I did not sit in on any one coaching of the coach event for the entire time. Instead I roamed around the room, observing pieces of the varied events that were taking place at that time while I audio-recorded each event using a digital recorder. In addition to my direct observation of these events, the course instructor also moved throughout the room to observe and at times participate in these coaching of the coaches events.

Phase Three: the Post-Coaching Phase. This phase of the research took place after the completion of the coaching program and in the weeks that followed the final session of the course. The goal of this final research session was to collect data that would provide a better understanding of the impact of the coaching program on the perspectives and knowledge of each aspiring school leader. In a parallel process to the Pre-Coaching Phase research session, the Post-Coaching Phase research session began with each aspiring school leader constructing three concept maps. So as to examine changes in perspective and understanding from the beginning of the coaching program to the end of the program, the same three concept maps were provided to each participant – Roles of a Principal, Instructional Leadership, and Coaching. The concept maps were provided to the aspiring school leader participants in exactly the same manner as they had been in the Pre-Coaching Phase research session. The participants were not provided copies of their original concept maps to assist in the filling out of these concept maps. The purpose of this activity was to look at changes in the associations and patterns that emerged in their understanding of instructional leadership after participation in the

coaching program.

I developed a 25 question interview guide to generate perspectives and experiences of each aspiring school leader to accompany the concept map construction (see Appendix H). Although a set of 25 questions provided a structure for the final interview, the interviews themselves were conducted in a semi-structured and open-ended nature so as to allow for probes into relevant and unique paths of information that might arise out of the interview process (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The purpose of this final interview was to delve into the perspectives of the participants in regards to the coaching program itself, as well as varied facets of instructional leadership. The final interview focused on understanding the role that the coaching program had on each aspiring school leader's development of coaching skills, the benefits and limitations of the structure of the coaching program, the impact that the program had on their development as school leaders, and the potential for their use of this coaching as a school leader.

Participation in the phases by the aspiring school leaders. Seven of the eight participants completed all facets of the study. One participant was unable to participate in the Pre-Coaching Phase research interview due to time constraints in her schedule. This participant did, however, fill out the demographic survey and the concept maps and return these to me electronically. Although this participant's schedule did open up later in the semester to allow for this interview to take place, I chose not to conduct this Pre-Coaching Phase interview at that point. The choice to not conduct this interview was made due to the fact that the interview would have taken place while the participant was actively involved in the coaching cycles. Since the purpose of the initial interview was to

gather the perspectives and understanding of the aspiring school leaders before they started coaching, if the interview was conducted while this participant was coaching, the responses to the questions likely would have been very different than responses before the coaching began. The following section will detail how the data that was collected in these three phases was analyzed for use in this research.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process is the point at which all of the collected data are put together to uncover patterns and themes within the research (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). According to Stake (1995), in the data analysis stage, "the qualitative researcher concentrates on the instance, trying to pull it apart and put it back together again more meaningfully – analysis and synthesis in direct interpretation" (p. 75). Coding is the major instrument used to analyze the collected data for these patterns and themes (Saldana, 2010). In order to prepare the collected data for the coding process, the transcription of interviews and videotapes was required (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). I performed verbatim transcriptions of all audio-recorded interviews, audio-recorded coaching of the coaches events, and videotaped steps of the coaching cycles for use in the analysis process. I chose to personally transcribe these audio- and video-recordings so as to ensure my ability to garner a more in-depth understanding and familiarity with the collected data.

In this study, five forms of data were collected for analysis: interviews, observations, videotapes, audiotapes, and concept maps. Although the analysis of concept maps is often conducted using quantitative statistical methods (Daley et al., 1999; Wheeldon, 2010), the analysis in this study focused on the qualitative nature of the

concept maps created by the participants. Wheeldon (2010) suggests that qualitative analysis of concept maps can be accomplished through noting the structure of the maps in terms of the way they were organized and the types of connections that were made. The terms and concepts that the participants used to connect the key concepts in both the initial and final concept mapping activity were analyzed with particular attention given to any changes between the initial and final maps.

For the analysis of the participant interviews, the first cycle coding processes of 'in vivo' and 'values' coding were used to note "participant language, perspectives, and worldviews" (Saldana, 2010, p. 48). According to Saldana (2010), in vivo codes are based on "impacting nouns, action-oriented verbs, evocative word choices, clever or ironic phrases, similes, and metaphors" (p. 75) that demonstrates a person's perspective. Similarly to 'in vivo' codes, values coding rely heavily on a participant's "paradigm, perspective, and positionality" (Saldana, 2010, p. 93) and the value they explicitly or implicitly assign to aspects of their world. Since this study was looking at the aspiring school leaders' perspectives on instructional capacity and development, the use of 'in vivo' and 'values' codes allowed for delves into these perspectives and paradigms.

In terms of the observation of the coaching cycles, a provisional coding system was utilized (Saldana, 2010). Provisional codes are built from a predetermined set of "anticipated categories or types of responses/actions that may arise in the data" (Saldana, 2010, p. 120). According to Saldana (2010), these codes are developed from prior work in the field including reviews of literature and pilot studies. Although a formal prescriptive coding scheme was not used for this provisional coding, key facets of coaching from the literature such as providing feedback, offering suggestions, asking

questions, and time spent talking versus listening were coded in the analysis. In addition to provisional coding, all of the videotaped steps of the coaching cycles were coded using Saldana's 'in vivo,' 'magnitude,' and 'process' coding schemes. These forms of coding served as a means to note the aspiring school leaders' actions, practices, and use of language during the coaching cycles.

At the completion of the first cycle coding on all collected data, the second cycle coding process took place. According to Saldana (2010), second cycle codes "literally and metaphorically constantly compare, reorganize, or 'focus' the codes into categories, prioritize them to develop 'axis' categories around which others revolve" (p. 42). The coding process for the second cycle utilized 'pattern' coding which "develops the 'meta-code' – the category label that identifies similarly coded data" (p. 150). As Saldana points out, 'pattern' coding is used "to develop a statement that describes a major theme, a pattern of action, a network of interrelationships, or a theoretical construct from the data" (p. 154). Creswell (2007) refers to this as an inductive process where the researcher is building a "comprehensive set of themes" (p. 39) out of the data. This second cycle entailed the compilation of the varied data collection methods and coding schemes into a pattern of analysis that could be used to bring all of the collected data together into the key findings of this research study.

Limitations of the Study

As with all research, this proposed study has within it a series of limitations. The concept maps proved to be a limitation due to them being an inconclusive measure of the aspiring school leader's perspectives and understanding of the key concepts associated with instructional leadership. These maps were intended to provide a means to delve

deeper into the aspiring school leaders' thought processes as they entered and exited the coaching program. Although the concept maps that the participants constructed did provide some general information as to their understanding of these concepts, the maps did not provide conclusive data for analysis. A possible explanation for this limitation in the quality of the data could be due to the participants not being provided enough description of the expectations for their construction of the maps. When providing the concept maps to the participants, I purposefully provided few details so as to not inhibit their creativity in constructing the map. This lack of clarity on the expectations led to concept maps that were diverse in construction, were often not completely 'on-topic,' and lacking of overall patterns of understanding. Due to the lack of conclusive data from the concept maps in the beginning and end of the coaching program, the analysis of these maps was not included in the findings of this study.

Due to the fact that this research is a case study of a single coaching program, the generalizability of the findings is a key limitation. Case study research is often limited in its generalizability, as it focuses on a single phenomenon or a small number of participants (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). Since this research studied a group of participants bound within the same institution and program, the ability to generalize to a larger realm of instructional leadership and principal development is limited. However, as Berg (2009) suggests, "when case studies are properly undertaken, they should not only fit the specific individual, group, or event studied but also generally provide understanding about similar individuals, groups, and events" (p. 330). Thus despite a lack of large scale generalizability, the findings of this study could be used not only by the ELDA itself for future implementation of this coaching program, but also by

other institutions and principal preparation programs to inform their practice on developing instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders.

An additional limitation in this study is the possibility that participants will act or answer out of a sense of "social desirability" (Fowler, 2009, p. 108). Participant behaviors during the coaching program and answers to interview questions could be driven by a need to respond in ways that will acceptable to the institution or to me. Assurances of confidentiality for all study participants were provided to each participant to limit the need to answer or act in socially desirable ways. Additionally, I shared with each aspiring school leader the fact that I was not a part of the ELDA program, and was merely providing an evaluation of the coaching program. However, despite these assurances I provided to the participants, it was entirely possible that the participants might have answered in socially desirable ways which posed a limitation to the data. Concerns over confidentiality may have also caused the other four participants in the class to refuse to be a part of the study, thus limiting the breadth and likely the depth of my study.

In addition, my own role as a doctoral student in the University of San Diego's Department of Leadership Studies could be viewed as a limitation to this research. Although the Department of Leadership Studies and ELDA are separate entities within the School of Leadership and Education Sciences, the fact that I, as a student from one program, was involved in researching another department could be construed as a limitation. However, as I entered into this research on the coaching program, I was not familiar with any of the students in the program and had only limited contact with the

instructor of the course during the pilot study of the initial implementation (Hubbard & Franey, 2012). Throughout this study I maintained a professional relationship with all members of the ELDA program and controlled for any bias that might occur due to my role as a student in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences.

The final limitation in regards to the structure of the coaching program is that the impact of coaching, in general and this coaching program specifically, is difficult to tie directly to improved teacher practice and student achievement. According to the literature on professional development, in order to truly determine the effectiveness of a professional development program, the learning that takes place needs to be connected to hard data in the form of student scores and learning (Desimone, 2011; Dufour, 2004; Dufour et al., 2004; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Guskey, 2002a; Hirsh, 2009b; Kelleher, 2003; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000; Wei et al., 2010; Yoon et al., 2007). As Desimone (2011) suggests, "the final test of the effectiveness of professional development is whether it has led to improved student learning" (p. 71). The full and complete assessment of the impact of the coaching between the aspiring school leaders and the teachers would require the examination of the achievement of the teacher's classroom students before and after the coaching intervention as well as a randomized trial study that would control for other school and classroom variables. Neither the ELDA coaching program, nor this study, has a construct in place to include measures of student achievement related to the coaching between the aspiring school leader and the teacher. Assessing the coaching program at this level is outside the scope of this dissertation study. Although this study will not include student achievement as a measure, the findings of this study could inform future large-scale studies that would delve into that level of research.

Summary of Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine the ELDA coaching program and its role in developing the coaching capacity of aspiring school leaders. This study utilized a qualitative research approach using concept maps, interviews, and the observation of practices within the coaching program to understand any changes in the aspiring school leaders' perspective as well as their development of the skills associated with instructional coaching as a result of their course participation. The findings from this study are presented in the following chapter with particular attention given to the aspects of the coaching program that supported or challenged the aspiring school leaders' development of coaching skills and instructional leadership capacity.

Chapter Four

Findings

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the development of instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders in a principal preparation program. Instructional leadership is recognized in the literature as a key role for modern-day school leaders (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Zepeda, 2005). According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) instructional leadership capacity is centered on the development of teachers' instructional practice through designing and implementing professional development, observing and supervising teachers' practice in the classroom, discussing teacher practice, and suggesting improvements for this practice. The ELDA coaching program was designed to focus on developing instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders through the clinical practice of coaching teachers on instruction. This qualitative research study focused on ELDA's coaching program in order to assess the impact of this program on aspiring school leaders' development of instructional leadership capacity. This research looked at the coaching program through three questions:

1) How does the coaching program support the development of coaching skills for aspiring school leaders?
2) What factors challenged the development of coaching skills for aspiring school leaders?
3) What impact does the coaching program have on the aspiring school leaders' perspectives on instructional leadership?

The previous chapter fully delineates the methodology of this research study. For the purpose of clarity in this chapter, the methodology will be briefly addressed.

This investigation occurred across three phases: (a) at the beginning of the coaching program, but prior to the start of the coaching cycles, (b) during the coaching cycles, and (c) after the completion of the coaching program. The participants began by completing a demographic survey that included questions about the participants' previous experiences with coaching. At both the beginning and the end of the study, the participants constructed three concept maps – 'Roles of a Principal,' 'Instructional Leadership,' and 'Coaching' – and participated in an interview. In the middle phase of the research, the various steps of the coaching cycles were recorded for observational purposes. The findings within this chapter emerged out of the data in the three research phases. Throughout this chapter, these methods will be referred to in order to delineate where particular skills were observed, understandings were shared, or perspectives were heard. In order to protect the anonymity of the participants in this study, the female tense will solely be used to refer to the participants throughout this chapter. The following sections will delve into the findings of this study, using data as evidence in accordance with the three research questions at the center of this study.

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the development of instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders in a principal preparation program. In order to examine the development of their instructional coaching, a thorough understanding of the aspiring school leaders' prior experiences with and pre-existing knowledge of coaching was necessary. Thus, this chapter will begin with the description of the aspiring school leaders' prior experience with coaching and their pre-existing

knowledge of coaching as they entered into the coaching program. The following section in this chapter will examine the details of the ELDA coaching program in terms of the pedagogy and curriculum of the course in which the coaching program occurred. This enables an understanding of what occurred in the coaching program to not only address the aspiring school leaders pre-existing understanding and experience with coaching, but to develop their coaching skills and instructional leadership capacity. The final section of this chapter will examine and identify the aspects of the coaching program that either supported or limited the aspiring school leaders' development of coaching skills and instructional leadership capacity. The findings presented in this final section emerged from the data collected in the three phases of research and focus on the three research questions that led this study.

Aspiring School Leaders' Pre-existing Experiences and Knowledge

In order to understand the aspiring school leaders' pre-existing understanding of coaching, that is, as they entered the coaching program and before they received any training, the participants were asked to construct a concept map on coaching, answer survey questions about their previous experiences with coaching, and respond to a series of questions on coaching in the pre-program interview. Originally the concept maps and the pre-program interview were planned to be completed before the start of the course to fully gauge the participants' pre-existing knowledge of coaching; however, access to these participants did not come until after the first class session and thus many of the students had begun reading the books for the course. This is an obvious limitation to gauging their pre-existing understanding and knowledge of coaching, however, since the initial interview and concept map construction did take place before the aspiring school

leaders started actually coaching in the cycles, their responses do provide insight into their prior understanding of coaching. Seven of the eight aspiring school leaders in this study participated in the Pre-Coaching Phase interview. Thus, the data from the interviews presented in this section on the participants' pre-existing understanding and knowledge emerged from the work of these seven aspiring school leaders.

Understanding and knowledge of coaching. The aspiring school leaders came into the coaching program with little previous experience with coaching. Their responses to survey questions indicated that four of the eight participants had been previously coached by a principal, but only two of the participants had previously coached a teacher. Their lack of experience was evidenced by the surface-level responses they gave to questions on coaching during interviews.

When asked about the purpose of coaching, for example, four of the seven aspiring school leaders who participated in the Pre-Coaching Phase interview responded that it was to have a 'fresh set of eyes' in the classroom that could provide a new perspective for the teachers. One participant stated that coaching was "to get someone to either see what you're seeing or see something you're not seeing that could affect something you're working on." Another participant explained the purpose of coaching as: "It's just to have a safe person to run ideas off of." While these comments capture part of what coaching is, they do not capture the deeper meanings of coaching. For example, only two of the participants specifically talked about the connection between coaching and student achievement. Additionally while four of the seven participants stated that coaching would positively impact a teacher's instruction, they did not provide any details about what this impact would look like.

The participants were also asked in the pre-program interview about the purpose of coaching for the administrator. The common theme to run across the responses was that the purpose was for the administrator to know what is happening in the classroom. One participant noted that the purpose was for the principal to know "what is the teaching because then [the principal] can answer for why aren't those students moving up, why are those students lacking" and another participant shared that "I want to see the teaching, I want to know how that teacher teaches it." One participant shared that coaching provided principals the opportunity to 'mold' what was happening in classrooms. Additional responses from other participants stated that the purpose was to provide feedback to the teacher, improve teacher instruction, and increase student achievement.

This understanding of coaching was demonstrated further when participants responded to two hypothetical situations they were provided in the pre-program interviews. These hypothetical situations asked the participants to specifically describe how they would coach a teacher on an instructional need. All seven respondents were able to directly provide coaching concepts from the literature, such as getting the teacher to reflect, asking the teacher questions, setting a focus for the coaching, observing the teacher, and collaborating with the teacher. It is unclear as to whether this knowledge of coaching came directly from the readings in the course, or from their own pre-existing knowledge. However, these general recommendations, while clearly on point, lacked the specificity as to what these terms meant that might have indicated an in-depth understanding and experience with coaching.

For example, one of the hypothetical situations described a scenario where an aspiring school leader attended a conference on instructional leadership, learned about

coaching, and then proceeded to coach a teacher (see Appendix G). In response to this situation, two of the participants stated that they would coach in the manner that was taught to them in the conference. One participant stated: "I would assume the professional development would have some sort of step-by-step about how to coach them...I would hope there is some kind of framework there." The other participant echoed this point in offering: "I guess it would depend on what [I] learned at that professional development conference... I'm not sure what the strategies in particular would be based on that conference." Three of the participants shared that in this situation they would find other teachers to provide the coaching, rather than doing it themselves. For example, one participant stated that she "would definitely focus on another teacher serving as kind of a mentor teacher or coach to that teacher" while another aspiring school leader shared that she would "recommend different ways of improvement [utilizing] a model teacher or the next door neighbor teacher or professional development." Delegating the responsibilities of coaching to a teacher, rather than taking it on themselves, might suggest their willingness to share leadership responsibilities. However, it could also be due to the aspiring school leaders not yet feeling that they were comfortable or confident in their own ability to coach.

When the aspiring school leaders did comment on how they would coach the teacher in these hypothetical situations, some of the respondents admitted that they thought having coaching conversations with teachers would be 'awkward' and 'difficult.' Four of the seven participants in the Pre-Coaching Phase interview offered top-down strategies for coaching the teacher including having "very concrete suggestions for the

teacher," advising the teacher "what she could do better," and "letting [the teacher] know what I would like to have them improve [upon]."

The aspiring school leaders use of top-down approaches in explaining how they would coach a teacher demonstrated a lack of understanding of the more organic nature of coaching that is founded in the relationship between the coach and coachee (Crane, 2002; Kouzes et al., 2010; Robertson, 2008). When the coach is telling the teacher what to do and what to fix without a dialogue between the coach and teacher about the issues that were observed, this relationship is fractured. The aspiring school leaders demonstrated throughout the pre-program interviews that their understanding of coaching was limited when entering into the program. However, the aspiring school leaders' understanding and knowledge of other aspects of instructional leadership demonstrated a more solid foundation.

Observation of teachers' instructional practice. As the aspiring school leaders entered into the coaching program, they demonstrated a good understanding of the concept of observations in their interviews despite their reported lack of experience with observations. To gather the aspiring school leaders pre-existing knowledge and understanding of observational practice, a hypothetical interaction question was presented to them in the pre-program interview (see Appendix G). This situation asked the participants how they would observe a teacher's instructional practices. The aspiring school leaders shared different purposes for these observations including to be aware of what was happening in the classrooms, how the teachers were teaching, and what areas of need existed so that they could be addressed. One aspiring school leader stated that observations should be conducted "not in an evaluative, 'Oh I'm going to get them,' but

just like I want to see the teaching, I want to know how that teacher teaches it." In addition to understanding the purpose of observations, the aspiring school leaders were also able to express effective knowledge of other key aspects of observations.

A common theme that emerged throughout the responses by the aspiring school leaders was their need for conducting both informal and formal observations in their future roles as school administrators. Four of the respondents directly referenced the use of regular informal observations in the form of 'quick pop-ins' in order 'to get a feel for the classroom' in a 'non-evaluative' manner. This is consistent with the literature on observational practices as represented by Zepeda's (2005) statement: "informal classroom observations provide valuable opportunities for more frequent interaction between the supervisor and the teacher" (p. 2). The utilization of a mix of informal and formal was a common theme that emerged from the aspiring school leaders responses to interview questions regarding observations. One participant summarized this mixed method approach to observations in the following way: "I think sometimes it needs to be like a drop in, let's see what they're doing and sometimes planned ahead where I have met with them to see what is [their] plan." Four of the aspiring school leaders explained that there is a place for both formal and informal observations in observational practice.

An additional theme to emerge from their responses was the need to inform the staff about the observations and to create a strategy for these observations with the teachers. Five of the seven respondents shared that informing staff members about plans for observations was necessary. For these aspiring school leaders, this entailed opening the lines of communication about observational practice and letting teachers know that they would be in the teachers' classrooms watching their instruction. This point of

informing the staff about their observational practices was a common strategy proposed by the aspiring school leaders. The approaches to this act of informing the staff about the observations were varied for the aspiring school leaders.

While two of the respondents shared that they would provide to the staff what they would be looking for in the observations, three other participants offered an approach where the guidelines and expectations for observations could be co-created with the teachers. One aspiring leader interested in co-creating guidelines and expectations, offered the following questions to lead the dialogue with teachers: "What is it that I should be seeing? Should I be seeing guided reading every time I go into your language class? Should I be seeing you doing productive group work and certain different things?" One participant stated that this dialogue with teachers was needed in that "if I'm just observing to observe for the sake of observing, it is a waste of my time and a waste of their time." According to the participants, by informing the staff at the beginning of the year that they would be observing their instruction in the classroom, a principal is able to establish what should be looked for in these observations, the expectations for what should be happening in the class during instruction, and the plan for how to provide feedback to the teachers after these observations.

In addition to informing the staff about the observations, five of the seven aspiring school leaders also commented on the need to provide feedback to teachers about the observations. This use of feedback to follow-up the observation is a key aspect of the coaching process (Knight, 2007; Zepeda, 2005). One aspiring school leader noted the impact of providing feedback to a teacher after the observation:

> I think it gives them a direct role. I think it makes them really think about their teaching... it's always hard to be observed, but then when you get the evaluation, it's like 'Who cares, well fine, that's what you think, great, see you next year.' So it doesn't really matter and then there's no follow up.

The participants provided a number of options for this feedback including written or oral feedback to the individual teacher or even staff 'debriefs' about general patterns the principal had observed in all classes. The need for immediacy in the feedback after observations was noted by three of the participants. The aspiring school leaders interest in dialoguing with teachers by providing to them information about the observations demonstrated an effective understanding of observational practices.

Despite the aspiring school leaders' knowledge of the importance of observing instructional practices in a classroom, the aspiring school leaders came into the coaching program with very little previous experience with actually observing teachers. Whereas some of the participants mentioned their only experience with observations having come from being observed by their own principal, only two participants directly referred to their previous observational experiences. The response from one of these participants was particularly poignant to the discussion of experience. She explained her lack of experience in the following manner:

> One of the aspects I missed the most in my intern[ship] was observing teachers. Last summer I was at a site where it was a principal and no [vice principal], and so she kind of gave me [vice principal] type things to do, but we never really went together to go observe teachers and talk about this is what you should see.

She also shared that her observations were limited to only informal observations and did not include the opportunity to discuss the observation either with her mentor or the teacher. The other participant shared her experiences in the ELDA program as: "we've done observations, all informal, talked curriculum instruction, led some [professional development], done all those things, but never sat down one-on-one with a teacher." One of these participants reasoned that this limitation was due to union/legal issues in that she was not able to discuss the observation with her mentor principal or the teacher. She explained: "because of union issues I'm not supposed to go in with her and observe and take notes and then discuss. We can both go observe, but we're not supposed to do any of that other stuff." With such a limited experience in conducting observations, the aspiring school leaders often related their understanding of observations to their own experiences being observed by principals.

Goldhammer (1969) found in his studies that "the supervision [administrators] have performed has generally mirrored supervision they received as teachers" (p. 64). Four of the seven participants talked about this point in that they recognized that their observation needed to be different than what they have seen in schools that they work in. As one participant noted, "oftentimes principals come in and stay for five minutes and miss the meat of the lesson." Another participant shared her experience with her principal as a means to change her own observational practices when she becomes a principal:

> [My principal] is the kind of principal [who] comes in and comes out and you don't know anything, you get no feedback. He has told me himself, he has no

idea how to give feedback, and so that kills me. Just let me know whatever was on that chart. What is it that you saw?

Since six of the aspiring school leaders had not experienced coaching for themselves, they were apt to express their thoughts on observations based on their experiences with their own principals. Their thoughts on observation and explanation of their understanding of this aspect of coaching seemed to be delivered out of an anti-thesis of the experiences that they had with their own principals.

Use of data and communication. In addition to their understanding of observational practice, the aspiring school leaders also demonstrated an effective pre-existing understanding of the use of data and communication to inform decision-making processes. In particular, five of the seven participants noted the need to use data to inform the design of professional development. As one participant suggested, analyzing school and student data lets the staff know "exactly where we are falling behind and what exactly needs to be improved." Another aspiring school leader added that data lets the school "see what groups of students might need the most support [and] what content areas need to be addressed." According to the aspiring school leaders, school and student data provides the basis for building the professional development program and allows for the professional development to tie in to the needs of the teachers, students, and school. The same reliance on data emerged from the responses from the participants in regards to a hypothetical question posed to them about working with a teacher whose students' test scores were decreasing (see Appendix G). Rather than simply placing blame on the teacher, all seven participants noted that they would use the test score data to examine all of the variables that could explain the decrease in scores.

For the aspiring school leaders, the other common theme that was mentioned as key to effective instructional leadership was the need to open the communication lines and dialogue processes between the principal and the teachers. Five of the seven participants in the Pre-Coaching Phase interviews expressed the need for communication and collaboration with teachers in the design and development of professional development. As one participant noted: "make sure that everyone is on board [with the professional development], everyone knows what [the professional development] looks like [and] everyone knows the expectations." However, communication was not just important in general professional development design, but also in regards to working with a teacher whose students' test scores had been decreasing. All seven of the participants in the initial interview noted the need to open the lines of communication with the teacher who needed additional support in the hypothetical situation so as to co-create plans for addressing the issues. The recurrence of statements emphasizing the need for communication between teachers and principals demonstrated the aspiring school leaders' understanding of these concepts as they entered into the coaching program.

Summary of pre-existing experiences and knowledge. The aspiring school leaders' pre-existing understanding of coaching and their previous experiences with coaching are the foundation from which they entered this coaching program. The aspiring school leaders demonstrated a good understanding of certain aspects of instructional leadership in their pre-program interviews including the observation of teacher's instructional practice, the use of data to inform decision-making processes, and opening lines of communication with teachers. In addition to demonstrating their levels

of understanding and knowledge in regards to aspects of instructional leadership, the aspiring school leaders also shared their lack of experience in coaching and observing teachers. These levels of pre-existing knowledge/understanding and amount of prior experience must be taken into consideration when determining the development of the aspiring school leaders in the coaching program. In order to build off the previous experiences and understanding of the aspiring school leaders, the coaching program had to provide an opportunity to not only learn about coaching as an instructional leadership method, but to also build a solid foundation for the aspiring school leaders to put this new learning into practice. The following section will examine the coaching program in regards to providing these opportunities for further development.

The Coaching Program

The purpose of the ELDA coaching program was to provide a platform for aspiring school leaders to develop their instructional leadership capacity through the acquisition of the skills and knowledge associated with instructional coaching. The coaching program was implemented as an integral piece of a course on instructional leadership for second year ELDA aspiring school leaders. Since the aspiring school leaders were coming into this course with one year of ELDA experience, they were entering this course with some development of instructional leadership capacity. This point was demonstrated in the previous section. This pre-existing experience and understanding of instructional leadership was to be used as a foundation for further development of this capacity through coaching. To fully understand the development of this capacity for the aspiring school leaders as a result of the coaching program, it is necessary to examine how the coaching program was implemented.

It is important to clarify at this point the difference between two terms that will be used throughout this chapter: the 'coaching program' and the 'coaching cycle.' The coaching program, which is the focus of this research, refers to the overall course of instruction offered by ELDA to the aspiring school leaders, including the pedagogy and curriculum of the course. The coaching cycle is an incorporated aspect of the curriculum offered through the coaching program. The coaching cycle is a four-step process for coaching a teacher on instruction. The four steps of a pre-observation conference, observation of instruction, post-observation conference, and coaching of the coaches event were designed by ELDA to be the fulcrum of the overall coaching program.

Pedagogy and curriculum of the course. The coaching program was embedded in seven course class sessions spanning four months. The first two sessions of the course concentrated on building a foundation of coaching and instructional leadership through the reading of literature, direct instruction from the professor, and class discussions of the readings. The focus of these sessions was to develop a better understanding of what coaching is in an educational setting and the ways in which school-site administrators could be actively engaged in the coaching of teachers.

The coaching program was a new addition to the regular course curriculum in the second year course on instructional leadership. Particular texts were chosen to provide a foundation of coaching knowledge for the aspiring school leaders. Three texts were utilized by the course instructor to teach coaching: (a) Gawande's (2011) *Personal Best*, an article on the merits and need for coaching in fields other than athletics; (b) Crane's (2002) *The Heart of Coaching*, a book on the transformational act of coaching; and (c) Knight's (2007) *Instructional Coaching*, a book on how to coach teachers on instruction

in an educational setting. Additional texts were read in the course; however, they were not associated directly with coaching as they were focused on other aspects of instructional leadership.

The three texts offered varied viewpoints regarding the principles of coaching. Gawande's (2011) piece provided an introduction to coaching for the aspiring school leaders who lacked previous experience with coaching. By using the framework of athletic coaches and performance coaches (i.e., singing, acting), it offered the idea of using coaching in fields such as medicine and education to better an individual's practice. Crane's (2002) book centered on the transformational aspects of coaching, arguing that coaching is "the art of assisting people to enhance their effectiveness, in a way they feel helped" (p. 31). Crane calls his process for coaching "transformational because it creates egalitarian, mutually supportive partnerships between people that transcend the traditional boss/subordinate relationship" (p. 32). Although Crane provides a process for coaching, his focus is more on the ability of the coach and the coachee to work together in a manner that fits the individual needs of both parties.

Whereas the other two texts offered more general insight into coaching across a spectrum of fields, Knight's (2007) book was directed completely at instructional coaching. Knight's book provides a 'how-to' framework for coaching teachers on their instructional practices and delves into many of the constructs that should be used for effective instructional coaching. Although all three texts were read as a part of the instruction on coaching, Knight's *Instructional Coaching* was the main text under study because the instructor believed that it would best teach students how to coach teachers. Knight's text is intended to help educators to develop a better understanding of the

purpose of instructional coaching, the merits of coaching as professional development, the role of a coach in a relationship with a teacher, and the format/structure of effective coaching relationships.

The instruction in the course was a combination of PowerPoint presentations about coaching, small group and class discussions about the readings, and the showing of two videos about coaching (Teaching Channel, 2011a, 2011b). In the pre-program interviews with the aspiring school leaders, they discussed the impact the books had on them and how the books provided them with a better understanding of coaching. The videos they viewed during the class offered them a chance to see coaching in practice. The instruction in the course on coaching was a necessary piece of the coaching program due to the students' lack of experience with coaching as only four of the aspiring school leaders had been previously coached by their principal and only two had coached a teacher themselves. After this foundational instruction was provided in the first two sessions, the remaining five sessions of the course were centered on putting coaching into practice for the aspiring school leaders.

Coaching teachers on instruction. The coaching cycle designed by ELDA is built from the literature on instructional coaching processes (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Veenman & Denessen, 2001). The first step in the cycle, which is termed the 'pre-observation conference,' is a meeting between an aspiring school leader and a classroom teacher that occurs at the beginning of the coaching process. The purpose of this meeting is for the teacher to share her plans for the lesson that will be observed, to select what should be observed and how it should be documented, to plan a date and time for the observation, and for the coach to be able to ask the teacher questions

(Dantonio, 2001; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000). In the second step of the cycle, the coach observes a lesson taught by the teacher. During this observation, the coach centers the observation on the pre-determined focus of the coaching process and observes in a non-judgmental or non-evaluative manner (Dantonio, 2001). The third step in the cycle, the post-observation conference, is the opportunity for the aspiring school leader and the teacher to discuss the lesson that was observed. It is in this step where the coaching occurs, as the coach is tasked with addressing what was observed during the lesson through feedback and questioning and for the teacher to reflect on instructional practice (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Dantonio, 2001).

The first three steps of the ELDA coaching program cycle were videotaped by the aspiring school leader for use in the final step; the coaching of the coaches event. The coaching of the coaches event provides the opportunity for an aspiring school leader to present to her peers in the ELDA course the three previous steps of the cycle that were videotaped. The purpose of this final step is for the presenting aspiring school leader to receive feedback on her coaching and have an opportunity to develop better coaching skills. This coaching of the coaches event aligns to Goldhammer's (1969) 'post-conference analysis' stage which "represents a basis for assessing whether supervision is working productively, for ascertaining its strengths and weaknesses, and for planning to modify supervisory practices accordingly" (p. 71). It is in this step that the coach is provided the feedback that will help in the development of instructional coaching skills.

ELDA designated these four steps as a 'cycle' of coaching and put into place in the coaching program two successive cycles of coaching for each aspiring school leader. The purpose of this was to provide each aspiring school leader an opportunity to modify

and improve their coaching in the second cycle based off of the feedback that was received from ELDA peers during the coaching of the coaches event. Throughout this chapter, these cycles will be referred to as cycle one and cycle two. The first cycle includes the first four steps: the pre-observation conference, the observation, the post-observation conference, and the coaching of the coaches event. The second cycle repeats the steps and occurs after the first coaching of the coaches event. These two cycles along with the instruction that the aspiring school leaders received within the ELDA course constitute the ELDA coaching program.

For these coaching cycles to take place, each aspiring school leader was tasked with selecting a teacher to work with during the coaching cycle. The only instruction given by the course instructor for this selection was that each aspiring school leader should try to select a teacher they could work with in both cycles. There were no additional parameters stipulated for the selection. Six of the eight aspiring school leaders chose to work with a teacher that was currently working at the same school-site where the aspiring school leader was employed. For the two participants who did not choose a teacher from their own work site, one aspiring school leader selected a teacher from her internship site, while the other chose a peer from the ELDA course to coach in that peer's classroom. This aspiring school leader was not currently working at a school-site. Of the seven aspiring school leaders that knew their teacher before starting the process, two chose to work with their partner teacher at their school, four chose someone that they were friends with at their school site, and the one chose an ELDA peer who was also her friend.

Each aspiring school leader went through two coaching cycles with the teacher they selected to work with in the coaching program. Participation in these coaching cycles meant that each aspiring school leader conducted two pre-observation conferences, two observations ranging from 30 to 60 minutes of the teacher's instructional practice, and two post-observation conferences with the teacher. Each aspiring school leader also presented her coaching videos two different times to a group of her peers in the coaching of the coaches event. In addition to this, each aspiring school leader participated in at least five coaching of the coaches events as a peer coach for another presenting coach.

The aspiring school leaders' participation in the various steps of the coaching cycles afforded them the opportunity to put what they had learned in the course about coaching into practice. The combination of learning about coaching and practicing coaching was the key focus for the implementation of the coaching program in the ELDA course. It was this opportunity that was meant to provide the platform for development of coaching skills and instructional leadership capacity for the aspiring school leaders. This development of the skills and capacities associated with coaching and instructional leadership will be examined in the next section. Particular attention will be given in this section to the role that the coaching program had in the development of the aspiring school leaders coaching skills, the aspects of the program that limited this development, and the impact of the coaching program on the aspiring school leaders' perspectives of instructional leadership and coaching.

The Impact of the Coaching Program on the Aspiring School Leaders

The combination of learning about coaching as a method of instructional leadership and the actual practice of coaching a teacher on instruction within the

coaching program offered the aspiring school leaders the opportunity to develop their individual coaching skills. This development was the key focus of the coaching program, for ELDA believed strongly in the association of coaching skills with the ability to be a strong instructional leader. Both the supports and challenges that emerged in this study will be examined in this section of the chapter. The coaching program's impact on the aspiring school leaders' development of instructional leadership capacity – which is the focus of this study – can be explained in three key findings. These findings were: (a) the coaching program supported the aspiring school leaders' development of coaching skills, (b) the development of the aspiring school leaders was limited by certain aspects of the coaching program, and (c) the coaching program challenged, but did not necessarily change the aspiring school leaders' perspectives of coaching and instructional leadership. Each of these key findings will be discussed explicitly in terms of the evidence from this study.

The Aspiring School Leaders' Development of Coaching Skills

Coaching, as an individualized and differentiated professional development practice, is recognized as a means of raising teacher effectiveness (Knight, 2007; Showers & Joyce, 1996; Zepeda, 2005). Thus, the acquisition of instructional coaching skills offers the aspiring school leaders the ability to support the developmental processes of teachers. This focus on the development of the instructional practices of teachers is associated with the role of principals as instructional leaders (Blase & Blase, 1999; Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Dufour & Marzano, 2011). Through a focus on these skills, associated both with instructional coaching and instructional leadership, the ELDA coaching program supported the aspiring school leaders' coaching development. This

finding was evidenced in the aspiring school leaders' growth from the beginning to the culmination of the program in certain key skills associated with coaching. The areas of growth were in their ability to coach the teacher on instruction using feedback, questions, and dialogue to better understand the needs of the teacher.

Coaching supported the aspiring school leaders' development largely because as one participant shared, "I learned a lot about myself and how I interact with teachers... in a leadership role." Other participants saw the opportunity to coach as "an eye-opening experience" and "a good way for us to learn what a coach is." The actual coaching of a teacher offered the aspiring school leaders the ability to put into practice what they were learning in the course. The aspiring school leaders' development of coaching skills helped to support their coachees' instructional practices as evidence by their growth over the two coaching cycles. The evidence of this growth will be shared in the following sections.

Coaching the teacher on instruction. According to the literature, key constructs of effective coaching are providing feedback (Crane, 2002; Kouzes et al., 2010), asking the teacher questions rather than telling the teacher what to do (Crane, 2002; Portner, 2008), participating in dialogue between the coach and coachee (Crane, 2002; Drago-Severson, 2004; Knight, 2007; Kouzes et al., 2010), and developing teachers' self-reflectiveness (Crane, 2002; Dantonio, 2001; Drago-Severson, 2004; Knight, 2007; Portner, 2008; Robertson, 2008). Knight (2007) suggests that "learning how to give direct, specific, nonattributive feedback is a skill that every [instructional coach] should develop" (p. 123). Providing feedback though is not just about giving suggestions, ideas

or strategies to the teacher. Effective coaching involves a balance of these constructs so as to develop the instructional practices of teachers.

In addition to providing feedback through suggestions and ideas, the coach should also be asking the teachers questions because this then enables the teacher to reflect on her philosophies and practices (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Portner, 2008). Knight (2007) establishes this point in the following manner: "[Coaches] are not simply there to help teachers remedy weaknesses in their teaching practice. Effective [coaches] help teachers grow by building on their strengths and helping them achieve potential they may not have realized that they had" (p. 140). As the literature above suggested, coaching is not just about providing 'answers' or 'fixes' to the teachers about their instructional practices. Coaching is instead about providing the teacher the opportunity to build their own reflective practice in order to improve their individual practices (Costa and Garmston, 1994; Crane, 2002; Dantonio, 2001; Drago-Severson, 2004; Knight, 2007; Portner, 2008; Robertson, 2008). The development of these key coaching skills was evident in the differences between the aspiring school leaders' coaching with the teacher in cycle one as opposed to cycle two.

Quality of coaching in the first coaching cycle. Each coaching cycle included a pre-observation conference, observation of the teacher's instruction, and a post-observation conference. The actual coaching between the aspiring school leader and the coach took place within this third step of the cycle – the post-observation conference. Through the coaching instruction received in the course, and in particular through Knight's (2007) text, the aspiring school leaders learned that the act of coaching the teacher should include asking questions to the teacher about her instructional practices as

well as providing suggestions to support modifications to her instructional focus. In Knight's text, he explains what the conference should not be:

> This meeting is not an opportunity for top-down feedback. Top-down feedback... occurs when one person, an expert, watches a novice and provides feedback until the novice masters a skill. This might be a great way to teach some skills, but it is problematic as a model for interaction between professionals who are peers. (p. 123)

Despite what the aspiring school leaders read in the text and learned as a part of the instruction in the course, in the first cycle of coaching, the aspiring school leaders were more apt to control the conference and provide top-down feedback.

In the first cycle post-observation conferences, the eight coaches provided an average of 3.5 suggestions and asked an average of 3.9 questions to their teacher per conference. While the similarities of these averages suggest an equal balance of questions and suggestions, and not just situations where the coaches were only telling the teacher what to 'fix,' the mere amount of questions and suggestions per conference demanded a closer look. The quality of and approach to these suggestions and questions offers a better example of the aspiring school leaders' coaching skills.

In the cycle one post-observation conference, the coaches provided suggestions to the teacher based on the observations they conducted on the teacher's instruction. The suggestions offered by the coaches to the teachers during the coaching included, but were not limited to the following: (a) prepare materials for the students before the lesson begins; (b) use strategies for student engagement, such as random calling of the students, pulling popsicle sticks to call on students, or think-pair-share activities; (c) ask more or

different questions to the students; (d) use visuals; and (e) slow instruction down. The majority of these suggestions aligned to the focus of the coaching cycle – the issue the teacher needed help with from the coach – that the teacher had selected in the pre-observation conference. The fact that the aspiring school leaders' suggestions were in response to an agreed upon the focus and were based on the observations made of the teacher's instruction, indicated that they understood the purpose of the suggestions – to help develop the teachers' instructional practices. However, the manner in which these suggestions were offered to the teacher often proved to be a limitation in the application of the coaching skills.

It was typical that aspiring school leaders would offer their coachee a stream of suggestions, one after another without opportunities for the teacher to respond, or reflect, or even account for what happened during the lesson. The aspiring school leaders' suggestions were commonly provided as a list of ideas, suggestions, and strategies for 'fixing' the issues that they had observed in the lesson without giving the teacher an opportunity to develop her own thinking around what or how to affect change. For example, one aspiring school leader suggested in succession the following ideas: "Maybe you could write the word *simile* up on the board," "You could try [to] re-ask a question to the students," "Wait a little bit longer before you ask another question," and "You might want to try [to work] on their vocabulary." While these suggestions fit the agreed upon focus for the observation – engagement and checking for understanding – they were provided to the teacher without the opportunity for the teacher to discuss them. In this particular post-observation conference, the aspiring school leader did not ask the teacher any questions, nor did she provide the teacher the opportunity to reflect on the

suggestions. Instead they were provided as a list of items to 'fix' the problems that had been observed in the lesson. Other post-observation conferences in cycle one followed this same method of offering suggestions with limited opportunities for reflection.

Dantonio (2001) offers that this form of coaching can be an issue in that "nothing will change until the teacher comes to terms with what needs to be changed, why it needs to be changed, and how it can be changed" (p. 81). To this point, in the post-program interview, the aspiring school leaders talked how they had structured their coaching session and admitted to using 'lists' and 'agendas.' One aspiring school leader shared her experience about her first attempt at coaching: "the downfall was that I sort of sat there and read my list as opposed to letting it happen organically... I think I was taking more the evaluative approach as opposed to the summative 'This is what I've seen; this is what we can work on.' " Another participant noted the rigidity in her interaction with the teacher: "I knew what I wanted to say, and so I did have an agenda." Pre-planning seemed to lead to an unbalanced and less helpful discussion as an aspiring school leader pointed out that she went in with "my list or my plan to talk about and when I went off plan, I was like, 'I don't know [what to do].' " The use of lists and agendas points to the idea that the coaches came into the cycle one post-conference with the notion that they were there to provide answers to the teacher so they could 'fix' the issue. Adhering to an agenda or plan allowed them to control the situation, but did not allow for the teacher to engage in the kind of process that would support their learning.

The key factor in the post-observation conference is in the balance between the teacher and coach. Described by Costa & Garmston (1994), coaching "is not one which the 'superior' does to the 'inferior'; rather they are two dedicated professionals striving to

solve problems, improve learning, and make curriculum more vibrant" (p. 50). The cycle one post-observation conferences averaged 8 minutes 6 seconds in length, with the coaches spending an average of 64% of the total conference time talking. Only one coach spoke for less than 50% of the time, taking up 47% of the total time. To further accentuate this point, four of the coaches spent at least 70% talking with one coach actually talking 87% of the total conference time. This high frequency of 'coach talk' does not align with Knight's (2007) assertion that a coaching "collaboration, at its best, is a give-and-take dialogue, where ideas ping-pong back and forth between parties so freely that it's hard to determine who thought what" (p. 28). Acheson and Gall (1997) agree and state that during these conferences an administrator should "listen more, talk less" (p. 161). Crane (2002) also argues that limiting the time the coach spends talking while coaching is a key factor in coaching. Final interviews with the aspiring school leaders at the end of the program revealed that they also recognized the lack of balance in the cycle one post-observation conferences.

The aspiring school leaders offered a number of reasons for their high frequency of talking time including an attempt to adhere to an agenda of suggestions they had for the teacher, being too regimented in their approach, trying to get too much done, being worried about sharing everything that was noticed in the observation, and because the teacher was lacking experience in teaching. One aspiring school leader explained the first cycle of coaching in that "we all talked too much and we were supposed to have the coachee talk more and we were all sitting there with our agendas talking and talking and talking." One of the aspiring school leaders explained that the first time going through the conference, the idea is "that you think you're allowing them to talk, but then you're

really not." Part of this, according to the participants, was due to the need to control the conversation. When asked about her weaknesses as a coach, an aspiring school leader noted a need for control as she said:

> I think again you have an idea of what you think should change, but that's based on your own strategies of teaching. So I think that was difficult for me to sit there and really listen and let things just happen. I think I'm more a linear thinker – this, then that, then that – so as opposed to letting the teacher drive everything. So I guess a weakness would just be the need for control of what's happening in that coaching event.

The one aspiring school leader who was the exception to this lack of balance (with a balance of 50% talking time for the coach and coachee) talked about the reasons for her balance in the conversation. This aspiring school leader shared that the balance she maintained in the conference was due to her observations of her peers' coaching videos. She had not yet coached her teacher when she saw the first round of aspiring school leaders share their videos. Her observation of their videos helped her to make a concerted effort to not talk as much as they had. She explained that she noticed that "there wasn't a lot of questioning, or [the coaches] did most of the talking and the other teacher sat there. I knew that when I went in I was going to do more listening and more questioning instead of telling." It was evident that the aspiring school leaders were struggling with the balance of the dialogue in the first coaching cycle, as they spent more time talking than the teacher did, which limits the opportunity for the teacher to reflect on her own instructional practices.

The importance of a balanced conversation is essential for effective coaching. For Costa and Garmston (1994), the key in coaching is the ability of the coach to help the coachee to build her practice through reflective measures. Costa and Garmston explain this in the following manner: "skillful cognitive coaches apply specific strategies to enhance another person's perceptions, decisions, and intellectual functions. Changing these inner thought processes is prerequisite to improving overt behaviors that, in turn, enhance student learning" (p. 2). As such, the use of suggestions and questions by the coach must align with this principle of bringing the coachee to a reflective state, which often means allowing them to talk out loud and work through the meaning they give to an event.

Knight (2007) suggests that the dialogue process in coaching is where "people inquire into each other's positions at least as much as they advocate their own point of view, and they use specific strategies to surface their own and others' assumptions" (p. 46). This form of dialogue is predicated on questions that elicit the thoughts and perspectives of the person being coached. Knight illustrates this point as he writes: "the collaborating teacher's opinions are as important as the coach's, and both points of view are worth hearing" (p. 41). In the cycle one post-observation conferences, the aspiring school leaders limited the value of the coaching session by the unbalanced turn-taking structure, but also because of the quality of their questions, which failed to elicit reasoning and meaning-making from the teachers. Most of the aspiring school leaders merely asked: "How do you think the lesson went?" There were some important exceptions. When coaches did ask more probing detailed specific questions, they were able to elicit the teacher's thoughts and perspectives, and thus, were more likely to

motivate the teacher's learning. Some of these questions included: "What do you think the students are doing or not doing if you're focused on what's happening in front of you?"; "How do you think you could get those students engaged in the lesson?"; and "How do you know they're getting [an understanding] for sure?" These questions caused teachers to reflect on their instructional practices, and to think deeply about their teaching.

In general, however, the questions asked by the coaches did not get the teacher a deep level of reflection. In fact, most of the questions that were used were for clarifying purposes including: "Did he ever get the homework packet?"; "Has she shared with you that app?"; "It was a lesson that was more of a review session right?"; and "Have you used these resources before?" Most other questions were so open-ended that they failed to be helpful such as this one asked by one aspiring school leader: "What do you think about that?" So although the aspiring school leaders did average 3.5 questions per coaching conference, the majority of these questions did not elicit reflection from the teachers on their instructional practices.

Overall, an analysis of post-observation conferences in cycle one revealed that these coaches did not yet possess effective skills at coaching the teacher. On a positive note, because the coaching program provided the aspiring school leaders the opportunity to go through two coaching cycles, the aspiring school leaders received support to help them develop the coaching skills that were called for. The coaching skills of the aspiring school leaders in the second cycle post-observation conferences demonstrated an effective development of these skills, which will be described in greater detail.

Development of coaching skills in the second cycle. In the cycle two post-observation conferences the number of suggestions offered by the aspiring school leaders to their teacher dropped dramatically from the cycle one post-observation conferences. Whereas in cycle one, the coaches offered an average of 3.5 suggestions per conference, in the second cycle, the coaches averaging only 1.5 suggestions per conference. The highest number of suggestions by any one coach in the second cycle was three, while two coaches offered only one suggestion and two others offered zero suggestions to their teacher. It could be argued that due to what the aspiring school leaders recognized as weaknesses in the first cycle – the coaches were talking too much – that this drop in suggestions might be explained by an over correction by the aspiring school leaders to not talk as much. However, this drop in suggestions coincided with an increase in questions and talking by the teacher in the conferences.

Instead of monopolizing the coaching session with their thoughts, the coaches increased the amount of questions they asked in this second cycle from an average of 3.8 to 4 with all eight coaches asking at least two questions to their coachee. In addition to this increase in questions and drop in suggestions was the fact that the average time spent talking by the coaches in the post-observation conferences decreased from 64% in cycle one to 44% in cycle two. In the second cycle the highest percentage of talking by any one coach was 64%, which had been the average for all coaches in cycle one. In the second cycle post-observation conference, six of the coaches talked for less than 50% of the conference, whereas in cycle one only one coach had accomplished this. While these numbers are substantial in terms of changes in the post-observation conference between cycle one and cycle two, as was noted in the previous section, the numbers associated

with suggestions, questions, and time spent talking are not as important as the quality of these suggestions, questions, and the kind of exchange it allows for between the coach and the coachee.

The suggestions coaches offered during this cycle were much more helpful. While they once again focused on changes the teacher should make, this time they offered more constructive feedback and included methods the teacher could use to challenge the students, methods to enhance the students' learning, and methods the teacher could use to connect with the students and get them more engaged. Two of the coaches identified specific resources the teacher could use to improve student engagement, while other coaches named strategies such as games or visuals that could be used to enhance what the teacher was already doing well.

This was a sharp contrast from the feedback provided to the teachers in cycle one where the coaches made suggestions to 'fix' problems they had observed. Examples of this include: "I did notice with some of the students that were not engaged I think that what's missing [is] a visual," and "see this girl in the front she's starting to sort of lose focus... so maybe it's the length of time, maybe it's what you're saying, [writing] on the board, and also maybe minimizing the amount of time that's direct teach."

Suggestions in cycle two were commonly built off of something positive the coach had observed the teacher doing during instruction. For example, one coach offered possible modifications to an already effective game the teacher had used to get her students more engaged while differentiating instruction. Engagement and differentiation had been the focus of both coaching cycles for this coach/coachee relationship. The coach was suggesting modifications that could fine-tune the new strategy by pushing the

benefits of the game even further by showing the teacher how the new activity that was focused on student engagement could be differentiated.

Other aspiring school leaders also offered specific suggestions that were not of the 'fix-it' variety, but were rather enhancements that could support the teacher. These suggestions included offering a list of additional formative assessments for the teacher to "throw in [her] tool box," and providing a stack of visuals for the teacher to use in teaching bias and stereotype. It was decidedly different orientation to their previous ones that seemed more evaluative to ones that were more supportive and constructive. The coaching exhibited by these aspiring school leaders was aimed at taking what the teacher was already doing to the next level of effectiveness.

In addition to the more positive direction of the suggestions, there was also evidence in the second cycle post-observation conferences of more discussion and co-creation of strategies to address the focus of the coaching process. This was accomplished through the use of questioning to garner the teacher's thoughts and perspectives. In the second cycle, more questions were posed that asked for the teachers to reflect on their practices. Examples of these questions included: "How do you plan on teaching more stereotypes?"; "I was wondering if you put it back to them and asked [it] as a question?"; "How might you involve those students that might be reluctant to put up their hand?"; "What could you do to prevent that distraction, especially for those kids that tend to be distracted anyways?"; "What do you think could have been improved upon with that activity?"; and "Is there anything else you think you could have done a little differently to make sure they were engaged?" This form of questioning exhibited by seven of the eight coaches in the second cycle post-observation conferences indicated that

the aspiring school leaders had come to understand that it was more important to elicit answers from the teachers that caused them to be reflective, rather than asking mere clarifying questions as they had used in the first cycle.

The aspiring school leaders noted the changes they made from cycle one to cycle two in terms of their own coaching. One participant explained the coaching change: "I didn't have [questions] that first round, I kind of knew what I wanted to say, and so I did have an agenda, but by the second round I had better questions in mind to lead them in that way." Another coach spoke on the same idea as she shared, "the second time I really tried to use the feedback that I received which was let the teacher drive the instruction." For another coach, the post-observation conference was easier in the second cycle because she "had questions in mind, things that would pull out information so that again [the teacher] was the one doing the talking and she was the one doing the reflecting and coming up with her ideas." These modifications to practice exemplified the growth the aspiring school leaders experienced within the coaching program. Not only were their skills developed, but they were actively engaging in making modifications to improve their practice.

A better understanding of instructional coaching. Along with the development of coaching skills for the aspiring school leaders, the coaching program also supported the development of their knowledge and understanding of instructional coaching. As showcased previously, the aspiring school leaders entered into the coaching program with little experience and knowledge about coaching. They demonstrated a surface-level understanding of instructional coaching as they began the program, largely because of their inexperience with coaching. This was due to the fact that so few of them had been

coached by a principal or had coached another teacher. The aspiring school leaders noted the impact of their own experiences as teachers with their principals in terms of evaluation practices. As noted by the participants, the practices they were accustomed to with their own principals lacked many of the constructs of instructional coaching. Thus, due to this lack of familiarity with coaching their understanding of coaching was limited when they entered the program. The coaching program offered the aspiring school leaders opportunities to not only learn about coaching through the course curriculum, but also to gain hands-on experience with the practice of coaching a teacher on instruction. As a result, the aspiring school leaders' understanding and knowledge of coaching developed in the program.

The pedagogy of the course provided literature to read about coaching, facilitated discussions on coaching texts, provided direct instruction, and showed videos on coaching to support learning. Although the curriculum and pedagogy may not have fully addressed the needs of the aspiring school leaders, an idea that will later be addressed in this paper, the aspiring school leaders discussed the benefits of being given an opportunity to better develop their understanding of coaching. The aspiring school leaders stated in the post-program interviews that the videos and readings 'helped a lot' and were 'beneficial' and 'powerful.' According to all eight participants, what was most impactful on their development was being able to watch their peers coach. A key reason for this was the fact that for many of the aspiring school leaders, the interaction with teachers on instruction was new to them. As one participant noted, "This is the first time that I've had a conversation and have worked with a teacher." One participant related this coaching experience to when she first coached sports. She explained, "I felt like it

was the first day I started coaching sports, like I don't know what I'm doing." By watching their peers coach on video, the aspiring school leaders were able to make modifications to their own coaching practices and then try out these changes in their own coaching.

The aspiring school leaders' responses to the interviews after the end of the coaching program provided evidence that the participants had gained a deeper level of understanding of coaching. Whereas the participants held a very general understanding of coaching as they entered the program, when exiting the program, they were much more specific and clear about what was required for effective coaching. In the pre-program interview, the aspiring school leaders explained the purpose of coaching as a method to get a 'fresh set of eyes' into the teacher's classroom. The responses to questions on the purpose of coaching in the post-program interview demonstrated a deeper understanding by the aspiring school leaders. One participant explained the purpose as: "giving the teachers a more active role in helping them improve their instruction and it's really making them think about what it is they're doing and how they can improve." Another participant noted that as a coach:

> You're not really honing [the teacher's] skills in teaching, you're more honing their skills on becoming a critical thinker, and you're honing their own reflection skills...then it hopefully becomes something they start doing all the time on their own.

The responses in the interview after the culmination of the program demonstrated a deeper understanding of coaching as the aspiring school leaders were able to share more about the coaching than simply seeing it as providing a fresh perspective for the teacher.

In addition to this deeper understanding of the purpose of coaching, the aspiring school leaders' also noted differences in the ways in which they themselves were viewing coaching as a result of their experiences in the coaching program. The thoughts of one aspiring school leader exemplified this difference:

> I feel I didn't realize how important coaching was until the [program] and before I always thought coaching was for the negative aspect of it, the corrective component... the bad teacher that needs to get better and it was really eye-opening... how even the best teacher could use another set of eyes and then to tweak it to make it even better.

Another participant shared that the coaching experience "impacted [me] in the fact that I realized how important it is to have." With such limited experience and familiarity with coaching as they entered the program, the coaching program provided the experience with coaching and the learning about coaching that could instill the importance of coaching as a tool in instructional leadership.

Coinciding with this deeper understanding of coaching as demonstrated in the post-program interviews, the aspiring school leaders were also aware of their own weaknesses in their coaching. When responding to questions in the post-program interviews, many of the participants acknowledged their coaching skills as a weakness in the first cycle. They discussed how they knew they had spent too much time talking in the first cycle and that they needed to change the discourse. One participant succinctly explained the changes they made: "I noticed on the second cycle we all shut up and let our teachers talk more." Another respondent offered the idea in this manner: "we all stopped talking because someone pointed that out and it was like, 'Oh, okay, let them talk

more, let them come to their own conclusions a little bit more.' " Another participant echoed this sentiment and suggested that "the idea is [that] it's just more powerful if the coachee generates the idea for herself so it's kind of like pushing, but it's more like a gentle nudge instead of having that [pre-planned] agenda." The aspiring school leaders, by the end of the program, realized that coaching had to be generative, grounded in a collaborative discourse with the teacher. Their ability to recognize their own weaknesses in coaching demonstrated their growth in the understanding of the concept of coaching. Without a thorough development of this understanding, these limitations in their own coaching skills would go unnoticed.

Summary of the development of coaching skills. The overall impact of the coaching program was clearly articulated by the participants in their responses during the post-program interviews. In response to one of the hypothetical situation questions about how to teach another administrator to coach teachers, the participants consistently referred to the methods that were used in this coaching program. These methods included reading the literature, watching videos, videotaping the other administrator's coaching, and actually coaching the other administrator on her coaching. The responses to this hypothetical situation aligned directly to the method in which they were taught in this course and was succinctly stated by one participant:

> I think what's important then is to do the layers like we did in class. Where they coach and then they come back and I would take a little time to sort of coach them on their coaching and do the layers – like we did in class – because I think that is really important. I might actually start out doing the same project we did so then

we can talk about their coaching on the video and maybe have them do a couple of cycles.

The aspiring school leaders' interest in using a similar program to the one they experienced when teaching another administrator how to coach was a sign of the impact of this program on the aspiring school leaders' development.

This section examined the ways in which the ELDA coaching program supported the development of coaching skills for the aspiring school leaders. This study found that the aspiring school leaders developed their coaching skills in terms of their ability to coach the teacher on instruction using feedback, questions, and dialogue as well as their ability to better understand the purpose of instructional coaching. The ELDA coaching program supported this development in terms of helping the aspiring school leaders to experience working one-on-one with a teacher for the first time. This was a key aspect of the coaching program that worked to support the aspiring school leaders' development of coaching skills. The opportunity for these aspiring school leaders to be able to put their understanding and theoretical grasp of instructional leadership into practice was vital to this development. From this standpoint, it is clear to see the impact that the coaching program had on the development of coaching skills for the aspiring school leaders. Although the coaching program did support the aspiring school leaders in these key coaching skill areas, there were aspects of the coaching program that did not fully support the development of the aspiring school leaders. These challenges will be examined next so as to better understand the overall impact of the coaching program on the aspiring school leaders' development.

Challenges to the Development of Coaching Skills

Despite the attributes of the coaching program that supported the development of coaching skills for the aspiring school leaders, there were limitations to the program that challenged this development. The challenges were in two main areas: (a) the pedagogy and instruction in the course provided a structure to coaching that limited the organic nature of coaching and (b) the coaching of the coaches events were limited in their impact on the development of the aspiring school leaders. Each of these aspects of the coaching program will be examined in this section so as to provide a better understanding of why these areas posed challenges to the aspiring school leaders' development.

Challenges posed by the course curriculum. When the aspiring school leaders were asked in the final interview what aspects of the course helped them to develop their coaching skills, five of the eight participants noted the impact of the books. The aspiring school leaders referred to the course readings as "beneficial," "enjoyable," "really good," and having "good material." Additional evidence as to the impact of these texts on their understanding of coaching is the fact that when asked on the final interview how they would teach another administrator to coach, half of the participants suggested reading some of the assigned texts from this course. Despite the positivity some of the aspiring school leaders showed towards these books, they were not remiss in the final interview to point out the challenges they faced in the selection of these texts. Two common challenges emerged from the perspectives of the aspiring school leaders in regards to the use of these texts in the course curriculum.

The first challenge that the aspiring school leaders raised in the interviews was the excessive amount of pages they had to read from such a limited number of texts.

Whereas it might seem that these participants were complaining about having to read too much, their comments suggested it was not the total amount of pages that was the problem, it was that the pages all came from the same two main books, the Crane (2002) and Knight (2007) books. One participant noted:

> I didn't enjoy how we had to read each book front to back... it made me think "Did we choose that book because everything in it was awesome?" And I felt like a lot of things were repetitive so then the next book you'd pick up you were like, "Oh well what part of this is really the meat?' And then if I want to do the recommended reading, I could read the entire thing.

The notion expressed in this comment from one participant was echoed in the comments from other participants. It was not about the amount of pages as much as it was the repetitive nature of the texts. Another participant shared her thoughts on the books in that:

> Certain books I would say a good third of the book was really good and useful the rest of it was just getting paid by the page. So I think figuring out what's important? What's most applicable? And having those readings and a lot of what we read wasn't discussed at all, and that's not a problem, but make that clear.

Other participants shared their interest in reading only a few chapters of each particular work and then discussing these chapters in more depth. Another participant noted that it would be great to read other texts as well in order to gain more perspective. Her strategy for this was to "just pick out what's awesome about Knight, figure out what's awesome about whoever else." The common theme to emerge was that the reliance on only two texts limited their learning.

The second challenge that the aspiring school leaders noted with all three texts, and in particular Knight's (2007) book, was that they felt the books were not written for principals wanting to be coaches. Knight explicitly writes to this point in his text as he states that the book is written for instructional coaches – "individuals who are full-time professional developers, on-site in schools" (p. 12). Knight continues with his point in that "a well prepared and talented coach can accomplish a great deal, but every coach's impact will be magnified when she or he works in partnership with an effective instructional leader" (p. 32). It was clear that Knight did not intend for the instructional coach and administrator to be the same person as he called for this collaboration between the two to raise the effectiveness of the coaching process. The fact that the main text explicitly denied the role of principal as coach caused a serious challenge to the aspiring school leaders' development in this coaching program. As one participant noted:

> In most of the reading that we did... the authors distinguished between the role of administrator and the role of coach. Not a single thing that we read did they ever consider that it would be one and the same.

Another participant shared her sentiments regarding the text that was chosen for the class by saying: "we read a book that's not necessarily meant for us." As demonstrated in the previous comments from the aspiring school leaders, the fact that this text differentiated a coach from a principal limited the aspiring school leader's development. The participants noted this point in suggesting that because they were learning how to be principals who coach, they needed a text that was specifically aimed at them.

This statement is not meant to diminish the impact of the Knight (2007) text, nor does it suggest that this text did not offer insight into the world of coaching. Instead, it is

important to note that the sole focus on one text, be it any text on coaching, could serve as a limitation to the potentiality of development. In any field or profession, if a person who is learning how to become a member of that field only gathers information from one source than he or she will be limited to seeing the field or profession through that one perspective. The use of only one central perspective on coaching limits the well-roundedness of the students' development.

Challenges posed by the course pedagogy. In addition to the challenges posed by the texts used in the course that were discussed in the previous section, aspects of the instruction were also challenges in the development of their coaching knowledge and skills. The aspiring school leaders named two areas that needed to be changed: they wanted more discussion time and more modeling of how to coach. According to the aspiring school leaders there was a significant lack of discussion time to really get into the actual practice of coaching. Although discussions took place in the first two sessions of the class on the books that they had read, there was very little discussion as a class on the actual coaching that they were doing in the program. As one participant shared:

> There weren't many conversations about [coaching], there were a lot, it seemed, class sessions about the readings before the coaching started. And then it really wasn't other than a couple of check-ins about, "Overall what everyone was thinking about the process?"

The observation of the course sessions supported the feelings that the participants shared on the discussions in the class.

Discussions in the first two sessions were centered on the literature about coaching and the discussions during the five sessions where the coaching of the coaches

events were occurring were short 'check-ins' about how the aspiring school leaders' coaching was going. These discussions did not get into the deeper topics that the aspiring school leaders were really concerned about with their coaching such as the importance of content knowledge for a coach, whether a principal could actually take on the role of coach, and what to do if the teacher was defensive during a session. Instead they focused on the feelings of the coaches about their coaching. Even when the aspiring school leaders posed questions on the topics that they were wrestling with, the discussion did not dig deeper into these topics, but rather moved onto other coaches' feelings on coaching. These were missed opportunities by the course instructor to model the type of discussions that should be occurring in the coaching cycles. The course instructor could have modeled the type of reflective questions that could elicit a deeper conversation centered on the topics that the aspiring school leaders were struggling with.

Interviews with the aspiring school leaders commonly referenced the need for more class discussions about coaching practices. Some of them said that the opportunity to discuss coaching as a class would have been 'powerful' and 'beneficial.' One strategy suggested to stimulate discussions and to support learning was to watch more videos of coaching. The students were shown two videos of coaching during the second session of the course, both of which were of Jim Knight, the author of the book they read in the course, coaching a teacher (Teaching Channel, 2011a, 2011b). The aspiring school leaders shared in their interviews that these videos were very helpful and beneficial to their development, but they wanted to see more. They commented in the post-program interview about this need offering statements such as: "seeing more videos and [seeing] people doing it would have been more beneficial than actually reading the text." But it

was not just about seeing more videos, the aspiring school leaders also commented that they wanted to see other people coaching, not just Jim Knight. Some aspiring school leaders suggested the use of coaching videos from previous students in the program, other YouTube videos of instructional coaching, or even to bring in outside experts from the field of instructional coaching.

However, the key to learning was not just watching more videos, but they also pointed out the importance of discussing what they were seeing in the videos. The aspiring school leaders called for the opportunity to go through a coaching conference together as a class. They felt that the opportunity to watch a video of a teacher's instruction together and then work together with the instructor to coach the teacher in the video would deepen their learning. One aspiring school leader explained this need:

> I think it would've been neat to have some more direct instruction on what a coach does and maybe have some more videos. I think we watched one or two videos by some experts which was great, you know, but maybe to review someone's coaching all together and to talk about it. And I know that'd be pretty gutsy for someone to show their coaching, but to really say, "Hey what would you do in this situation? What would you have said?" And get some more ideas flowing because I feel like I don't know really what I would've done too much differently on my coaching, I think I had a couple suggestions. But if everyone would've said, "Hey did you notice this in your teaching or did you notice how she didn't do this?" It would've really got the ball rolling with ideas.

The aspiring school leaders wanted opportunities to practice their coaching and have an exchange of ideas centered on a coaching video they all viewed together. When the Jim

Knight videos (Teaching Channel, 2011a, 2011b) were shown, the discussion on these videos was about how Knight had used the aspects of his own book in his coaching of the teacher. There were not discussions as to how the aspiring school leaders might coach the teacher in the video. This was a key aspect of watching the videos that the aspiring school leaders needed. As one participant noted, "We read a whole entire book on how to be an instructional coach, and then okay now go do it... it's not a whole lot of experience in how to make yourself more proficient in that skill because coaching is a skill." The thoughts and perspectives of the aspiring school leaders illustrated the pedagogical challenges that this aspect of the coaching program experienced as it attempted to support the development of coaching skills.

Examples of the pedagogy and curriculum challenges. The course pedagogy and instruction worked as a limitation to the overall development of the aspiring school leaders. These aspects of the coaching program demonstrated limitations in the areas of: (a) the coaching relationships between the coach and the coachee and (b) the selection and use of a focus for each coaching cycle. These examples will be explained so as to demonstrate the inherent limitations of the course pedagogy and instruction.

Building a professional relationship during coaching. The relationship between a coach and a coachee is a key construct of effective coaching processes (Crane, 2002; Dantonio, 2001; Guskey, 2000; Kilburg, 2001/2007; Knight, 2007; Kouzes et al., 2010; Peterson, 1996/2007; Portner, 2008; Stober, 2006; Stowell, 1988; Tyson & Birnbrauer, 1983). Knight (2007) proposes that questions be asked of the teacher at the onset of the coaching process to gather the teacher's "pressing concerns," "knowledge on the topic," "learning preferences," and "values" (p. 66). Knight theorizes that by asking these types

of questions of the teacher, the coaches can begin to understand the teacher and "they then can frame their message so that it will be heard" (p. 65). This building of the relationship between the teacher and coach potentially counteracts the situation that Acheson and Gall (1997) warn about. Acheson and Gall explain the problem in this way: "teachers are often defensive and resentful, and principals often lack skill and training in the prerequisites for a good relationship" (p. 248). The relationship-building aspect of coaching program proved problematic because of the way the aspiring school leaders and teachers were paired for the cycles.

As stated previously about the coaching cycles, the aspiring school leaders were tasked with the selection of a teacher to work with in the coaching cycles. Seven of the eight participants chose to work with a teacher that they were already either familiar or friendly with. The familiarity and close relationship between teacher and coach was evident in the videos of the pre-observation conferences. This conference is where the teacher shares her goals and focus for the coaching process (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Dantonio, 2001), the timeline for the process (Dantonio, 2001; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Veenman & Denessen, 2001), and the relationship between the coach and the teacher is built (Knight, 2007).

The one aspiring school leader who did not know the teacher when she started the coaching cycle did not take any steps towards building the relationship with the teacher. Her only question to this teacher was "What are you going to be doing today?" The other seven aspiring school leaders, who all knew their teachers when beginning the coaching process, asked more questions of their teacher. However, since they were already familiar or friendly with the teacher they were working with, six of these seven coaches

did not spend time in the conference asking questions about the *teacher* in order to better understand the teacher. Rather than finding out more about the teacher and her goals, philosophies, and experience, the coaches instead immediately jumped into figuring out the focus for the coaching with questions such as: "What do you want to work on specifically?"; "When I come in do you want me to run through the data of is it working?"; and "What do you think [your area of need] is right now?" Other coaches in this group of six did ask questions to the teacher about her class such as: "Why don't you tell me a little about the class?" and "Can you tell me a little bit about the class I'll be observing and the lesson?" However, these coaches did not ask the teacher questions that would enable the coach to learn more about the teacher.

Knight (2007) posits that the development of the coach and teacher relationship is integral to the effectiveness of the process. For Knight, the coach must understand the needs, interests, learning styles, and previous experience to be able to differentiate the coaching to fit the individual teacher. Based on this understanding of Knight's argument, the aspiring school leaders needed to understand their teacher as a teacher, regardless of whether they knew them as a friend. A renegotiation of the relationship is needed in order to build a relationship conducive to coaching effectiveness. Only one aspiring school leader in the group of participants took the approach of trying to better understand the teacher that she was working with even though she was already friends with this teacher.

This aspiring school leader asked the teacher questions that included, but were not limited to: "What are the rewards you experience as a teacher?"; "Is all your experience being a teacher at the middle school?"; "What are some of your professional goals?"; and

"What do you think you do well in the classroom with [your students] already?" This aspiring school leader also asked the teacher questions about the students in the classroom in terms of their strengths and weaknesses and explained her insistence on getting to know her friend better on a professional level and why it was crucial to her coaching:

> [A coach needs to] get to know the teacher, why they're a teacher, what they love about teaching, what their strengths and weaknesses are, what professional goals they have, just to kind of get to know them as a teacher as much as possible.

Although these aspiring school leaders already had a relationship with the teacher they were coaching, a renegotiation of the relationship was needed, but unfortunately, it appeared that only one of the participants realized this need. The aspiring school leaders' inexperience at coaching and their own familiarity with the teacher that they were working with led to a situation where they did not feel it necessary to build a different type of relationship with the teacher. For the most part, they mistook the value of a friendly relationship for the professional one that was needed.

This mistaken idea of relationship, where friendship took the place of a professional relationship, was problematized in the responses during the post-program interviews with the aspiring school leaders. Four of the seven participants who already knew the teacher they were working with wished they had worked with a teacher they did not know as well. The aspiring school leaders recognized the 'easiness' that working with a friend provided and as one participant noted, the selection of teachers impacted the coaching cycles "because we got to choose our own person to coach and these teachers we chose were not poor teachers it was a safe environment and you felt okay." However,

if they had worked with someone they did not know, participants felt that the coaching cycles would have as one aspiring school leader shared "force[d] [them] to develop the relationship quickly and it would be more like what [they] would be doing as a principal." Another aspiring school leader said, "I think the whole initial meeting and the initial trying to find a goal, trying to understand the purpose would have been a little bit more lengthy and a little bit more of a conversation."

These comments from the aspiring school leaders signify that they knew that there was a need to get to know the teacher they were working with. However, since they noted that they would only take that approach if they did not know the teacher well, suggested that they saw these questions as necessary only when they needed to 'get to know' a teacher they were not familiar with. This demonstrates a lack of understanding as to what these questions are meant for. This is an important aspect for any principal working with a teacher according to Glickman (2002). Glickman suggests that a leader must be cognizant of teachers as individuals, with various "ethnic, cultural, and age-related differences" (p. 91). The idea is to get to know the teacher better as a *teacher*, with particular attention given to their subject matter, their belief systems around instruction, and the style of their instruction.

Even though Knight (2007) writes about this in the book that the aspiring school leaders read for this course, the aspiring school leaders lacked a deeper understanding of this concept. This was due in large part to the course pedagogy and instruction that was limited in the deeper analysis and understanding of coaching. The aspiring school leaders needed to be provided the opportunity to better understand this aspect of coaching, so as

to better prepare them for building a different, more professional type of relationship with the teacher that they coached.

As was demonstrated in this section, there was a lack of developing and practicing the skills associated with building a professional relationship that would have better supported the coaching process. Allowing the aspiring school leaders to choose friends was positive in that it offered a comfortable place for the students in the course to 'try out' coaching, but it did not provide the opportunity to truly understand the meaning of relationship building. It is not about how well a coach knows the coachee as a friend or colleague, it's about knowing how they teach and why their practices are structured the way they are. In this sense, the coach/teacher relationships in the coaching program challenged the development of the aspiring school leaders' ability to effectively coach as did the pedagogy and instruction of the course that lacked the deeper analysis of what relationship building was really about.

The selection and use of a focus during coaching. An additional example of the limitation of the pedagogy and instruction of the course on the development of the aspiring school leaders was in the selection and use of a focus to best support the coaching cycle. Developing a focus is referenced in both the literature on instructional leadership in terms of the observation of teachers (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Glickman, 2002; Goldhammer, 1969; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000) and the literature on coaching (Dantonio, 2001; Knight, 2007; Portner, 2008). The purpose of a focus is to narrow the multitude of instructional practices that could be addressed into a few key issues that should be addressed. Goldhammer (1969) warns that selecting a focus is not about the number of foci, but rather what is appropriate for each individual process. He writes:

> Occasionally supervisors miscalculate optimal quantitative selection by selecting a few patterns for treatment which, despite their small number, are too many for Teacher to handle effectively all in one conference, either because they are incorporated by separate and unrelated categories or because, for emotional or conceptual reasons, they are too rich in meaning to comprehend and to cope with all at once. (p. 316)

Choosing a focus and then using it as the centerpiece of the coaching process is an integral aspect of coaching. The importance of this focus for coaching was established for the aspiring school leaders in the coaching program.

The perspective used to instruct on the importance of choosing a focus was from Knight's (2007) text, *Instructional Coaching*. Selecting a focus is an integral feature of this text as Knight suggests that providing a focus for the coaching process is essential as "coaches can easily feel overwhelmed when looking at the many teaching practices they could share with teachers and the many points of departure for coaching presented by the unique abilities of each teacher" (p. 139). In order to avoid this 'overwhelming' feeling, Knight devised the 'Big Four,' "a framework for organizing interventions and providing focus to coaching practice" (p. 139). Knight's 'Big Four' of student behavior, instructional content, direct instruction, and formative assessment are designed to guide the coach in knowing what to focus on when observing a teacher's instruction. The idea is for the teacher to pick one of these four areas that she could use help with in order to focus the coaching cycle. One aspiring school leader summarized this single focus from the teacher's perspective:

> The thing I like about the coaching is that it's focusing on one thing and focusing on how could I improve that, get good at that, and then let's move on to something else that I need improving instead of just seeing the whole thing and then being like "Ahhh I can't do it all" and then getting frustrated in that way.

The selection of one of these areas not only places both teacher and coach on the same page, but also allows for a thorough examination of the selected single focus. An additional aspiring school leader commented on the importance of having the teacher select a focus for the coaching:

> Showing the teacher that you're really interested not in "I want to come in and pick apart your program." It's "What do you want to focus on and that's all I'm going to be looking at, I don't care if there are other things going on. I don't care. I'm here for that because you want to make [the focus] better." And I think that that's an important part of it – to really set that lens for the whole session.

The comments of this aspiring school leader reveals an underlying conceptual understanding of what having a focus can do for the coach and the coachee and why it is important to have one.

Due to the use of Knight's (2007) text, the aspiring school leaders also showed effective skills at getting the teacher to select a focus. Seven of the eight pairs of coaches and teachers had a focus for the coaching process in each cycle of coaching. In each of these seven pairs, the teacher selected the focus, based off of the issues that she was experiencing in her classroom. The aspiring school leaders demonstrated an effective understanding of why the teacher's choice in the focus was important to the coaching process. For example, one aspiring school leader noted that "letting the coachee guide

your focus is how you continue to have buy-in." Another participant noted that "in those first cycles you have to let them be the ones who are leading the whole thing because you want them to have confidence and that you're there to help [offer] assistance."

In terms of asking the teacher about the focus, each aspiring school leader took a slightly different approach, but the majority of the coaches used Knight's (2007) 'Big Four.' For example, one participant approached her teacher in the pre-conference in the following manner:

> What we basically do in the coaching process is we focus on what has been referred to as the Big Four and that would be behavior, content knowledge, direct instruction, and formative assessment, so those are kind of the big areas that we look at that people can get help with – do you have any concerns that you want me to look at specifically?

Half of the aspiring school leaders asked the teacher to choose one of Knight's 'Big Four' as the focus of the coaching cycles. Other coaches used more generic questions such as "What would you like me [to] watch?" and "What would you like me to look for while you're teaching?" to determine the focus. Regardless of the approach taken by the coach to access the teacher's focus, the fact that seven of the eight pairs had a focus for the coaching process demonstrates the aspiring school leaders' understanding of the importance of this aspect of coaching.

Despite the effective selection of a focus for the coaching process by the teacher and the aspiring school leaders' understanding of the importance of a focus for coaching the use of Knight's (2007) frame also served as a limitation in the aspiring school leaders' development. They were so fixated on the selection of one of Knight's 'Big

Four,' that once the teacher selected a focus that aligned with Knight's work, the coaches took the teacher's choice of focus at face value. Arguably for a coach to be able to build instructional practice, it seems important that the coach fully understands the focus the teacher is suggesting, but also identify the teacher's actual instructional need. This involves asking questions that get at the issue in more depth, including asking what the teacher has done previously to address problems, what she's tried that's worked, what she's tried that hasn't worked, and why she feels this is an issue that warrants consideration in the coaching.

This line of questioning allows for the not only the coach to better understand the focus for the coaching, but for the teacher to work through the lesson so as to anticipate possible changes to the instruction (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Costa & Garmston, 1994; Portner, 2008) as well as to anticipate the impact of the instruction on student learning (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Dantonio, 2001; Portner, 2008). The topic of focus was often brought up in the discussions that occurred in the coaching of the coaches events. One aspiring school leader shared her thoughts on the idea in one of these discussions:

> I think that I would definitely during the pre- let her talk a little more about what she's tried and what hasn't worked because I think that sometimes when you have a coach-coachee conversation, that at the end the post-conference, they're already telling me things that [they've] already done and hasn't worked so I want to hear from her what she has done and it's worked and what she has done and hasn't worked.

Not only does this provide the coach with a better understanding of what to look for in the observation, but it also helps the coach to develop strategies/suggestions/ideas for addressing the problem in the post-observation conference.

Due to Knight's (2007) text, and because whole class discussions did not address this topic (although some discussions on this topic occurred in the coaching of the coaches events), the selection and use of a focus in coaching was limited. The aspiring school leaders were looking at the selection and use of focus in a structured manner, due to Knight's 'Big Four.' What the aspiring school leaders needed was the opportunity to go beyond and dig deeper into identifying a focus that would stimulate the development of the teacher. In addition to the limitations posed in this section regarding the course pedagogy and instruction, an additional limitation to coaching development was found in regards to the coaching of the coaches events. This finding will be fully developed in the following section.

Challenges posed by the coaching of the coaches event. The coaching of the coaches event took place at the end of each coaching cycle, occurring after the coach has completed a pre-observation conference, observation of the teacher's instruction, and post-observation conference. In this event, an aspiring school leader presents videos of her coaching cycle – all of the sessions she has had with her coachee – and shows it to her peers in the program to get feedback on their coaching. Peers coach the aspiring school leader who presented the videos in the same manner that they would coach a teacher on instruction. In other words the groups of coaches are expected to watch the coaching videos and then coach the presenting coach on the skills, actions, and strategies she used during coaching. The focus is on the development of coaching skills for the

presenting coach through the use of feedback, questions, and dialogue between the presenting coach and her peers.

The coaching of the coaches event closely resembles a stage in Goldhammer's (1969) clinical supervision cycle. Goldhammer's cycle, which includes a pre-observation conference, an observation of instruction, and a post-observation conference, closely resembles modern-day instructional coaching cycles. Goldhammer though suggested the use of a 'post-conference analysis' stage where the administrator's work with the teacher would be analyzed by other administrators. Goldhammer wrote that this stage "is the time when Supervisor's practice is examined with all of the rigor and for basically the same purposes that Teacher's professional behavior was analyzed" (p. 71). In the coaching of the coaches events, the focus of the coaching from the group is not on the teacher's instruction, but rather is focused on improving the coaching skills of the presenting coach. This event was designed to not only further support the development of each aspiring school leader who was presenting, but to also provide additional coaching opportunities for all of the aspiring school leaders in the class.

The addition of a second cycle of coaching in the coaching program, per the recommendations provided from the pilot study by Hubbard and Franey (2012), was meant to extend the amount of coaching time each aspiring school leader had experienced. This second cycle – a repeat of the pre-observation conference, observation, post-observation conference, and coaching of the coaches event – provided the aspiring school leaders an opportunity to put into practice the ideas presented by their peers in the coaching of the coaches event that occurred at the end of the first cycle of coaching. ELDA expected the coaching of the coaches event would be the key fulcrum

event in the aspiring school leaders' development. As the halfway mark in the coaching program, the cycle one coaching of the coaches event would provide each aspiring school leader an opportunity to receive feedback and suggestions from peers participating in the same coaching process. The coaching feedback each aspiring school leader received could then be used to modify and change coaching actions in the second cycle.

ELDA's expectations for the coaching of the coaches event were only partially realized. The aspiring school leaders claimed that they developed some of their coaching skills as a direct result of the coaching of the coaches event, however, aspiring school leaders claimed that their development was the result of the videos they watched of their peers coaching rather than any feedback or discussion that occurred.

The impact of the coaching of the coaches event. For the purpose of clarity, throughout this section, the aspiring school leader who presents their videos to the other coaches in the coaching of the coaches events will be referred to as a 'presenting coach.' These coaching of the coaches events took place within the confines of the ELDA classroom and consisted of multiple groups of coaches working with a presenting coach at the same time in different parts of the room. At any one time during these events, between two and four groups of students would be engaged in a coaching of the coaches event. The size of the groups and membership within each group changed from event to event, but the average size of the cycle one coaching of the coaches event groups was nearly five coaches for each presenting coach and two coaches per presenting coach in cycle two.

The difference in the average number of coaches for each presenting coach between the cycle one and cycle two coaching of the coaches events was due to student

feedback to the instructor that smaller groups would be more effective. One participant's opinion regarding the size of the coaching groups was that "what I liked is that last round where there was fewer of us together and I think it was [that] we were able to say more, we were able to contribute more, we were able to be more helpful." Others also noted that smaller groups were more effective because they provided the groups a chance to really discuss what was happening and that there were more active voices in the group.

In addition to the positive comments made by these participants regarding the value of smaller groups, they also noted that when they did receive feedback from their peers, it helped them to modify their coaching practices. According to the participants, their peers helped them to recognize that they were doing too much talking in their conferences with the teacher, helped them to make changes to their use of questions and suggestions, offered advice about how to improve the filming of their observations, and clarified the need to adhere to one instructional focus. Some noted the impact of seeing their coaching from other people's perspectives and how it helped them to better understand that there are different personalities and leadership styles. One participant commented on the impact of the coaching of the coaches events after the first coaching cycle in that "it gives you a little more empathy for the teacher you're coaching again, which helps you build the relationship a little better when you walk back in."

The comments and thoughts of the aspiring school leaders on the role of the feedback they received from their peers in the coaching of the coaches events suggests potential for this coaching development strategy. However, observational data of the coaching of the coaches events did not align with the participants' comments. The difference between the responses given by the aspiring school leaders at the end of the

study and the observable data warrants further consideration. Disparities were in three main categories: (a) how the time was spent in the group; (b) the suggestions, ideas, and strategies provided by the coaches; and (c) the questions asked by the coaches. The findings suggest that the coaching of the coaches event may have presented more a challenge to the aspiring school leaders' development.

How the time was spent in the event. For the purposes of this section, the coaching of the coaches events were split into two sections: (a) the time watching the videos and (b) coaching conversations. This categorization of the coaching of the coaches events is pertinent because the time spent watching the videos did not include any coaching. Instead this time was spent asking clarifying questions about what was happening in the videos and about the teacher and class in the video. The actual coaching took place once the videos were turned off and the group began conversing about the videos. This section of the event was the place in which the group provided coaching to the presenting coach in the form of suggestions, questions, and dialogue.

On average, the cycle one coaching of the coaches events lasted 27 minutes 40 seconds. Out of this average total time, an average of 17 minutes 9 seconds, or 63% of the total event time, was spent by the group watching the presenting coach's videos of the pre-conference, observation of instruction, and post-conferences. This meant that on average, only 10 minutes 31 seconds, or 37% of the total time in the event, was not spent watching videos and was used for discussion and coaching. In fact, only one of the cycle one coaching of the coaches events had over 50% of the time spent conversing about coaching, with 20% as the lowest percentage in one event. The amount of time spent watching videos in the second cycle post-observation conferences actually increased. In

the second coaching of the coaches event, the average total time spent in the event was 21 minutes 58 seconds with an average of 17 minutes 48 seconds spent by the group watching the videos and an average of 4 minutes 10 seconds spent coaching. The average amount of time spent coaching represents a mere 19% of the total time in the event. In this cycle, the high percentage of time spent coaching was 32% with a low of 8%. To further exemplify this disparity of time spent coaching versus watching the videos, seven of the eight coaching of the coaches events in the second cycle consisted of less than 23% coaching time.

During their post-program interviews, the aspiring school leaders commented on how the time was spent in the coaching of the coaches events in their post-program interviews. Participants felt that too much time was wasted on watching the videos as seen in one participant's comment: "watching the videos in class – that just took up a tremendous amount of time." Another aspiring school leader noted that watching the classroom teacher teach was not pertinent to the coaching of the coaches event and that "what mattered was the pre- and post-observation [conferences]." This participant shared that too much time was spent watching the video of the teacher's instruction instead of watching the actual 'coaching' in the videos. Other participants noted the effect of the video playing on the conversations in the coaching of the coaches events in that hearing and even seeing the video was often a difficult task. With other coaching of the coaches events taking place in the same room and difficulties with playback of the videos on laptops, the aspiring school leaders felt frustrated and unable to grasp what was going on in the videos at times. As noted by the participants in this study, if the event is meant to be the key developmental tool for changes in coaching skills and actions, then a higher

percentage of coaching must take place within the events. If the ELDA instructor would have facilitated a debriefing of the videos, the aspiring school leaders' learning may have improved. According to participant feedback, observational data, and resulting coaching outcomes, it appears that too much time was spent watching the videos and not enough time was spent actually providing feedback and asking questions of the presenting coach. The following sections will describe the issues with the coaching that occurred within the limited time spent on coaching in the events.

Questions asked in the coaching of the coaches events. The limited amount of time spent actually coaching in the coaching of the coaches events was a challenge to the development of the aspiring school leaders. Further accentuating this challenge was the fact that the questions posed to the presenting coach's peers during this limited coaching time did not represent quality coaching questions. One of the major goals of coaching is to get the coachee to a place where they are deeply reflective on their behaviors, actions, and perspectives (Acheson & Gall, 1997; Costa & Garmston, 1994; Dantonio, 2001). This was the goal of the coaches when they were working with the teachers on instructional coaching, and this was the goal that the aspiring school leaders were to operationalize as they worked with the presenting coach within the coaching of the coaches event. However, observational data showed that there was a limited use of questioning that would have elicited deeper reflection. Although questions were posed in both coaching of the coaches events to the presenting coach by the others in the group, the questions asked were commonly clarifying questions. In the cycle one coaching of the coaches event, the coaches asked an average of five questions to the presenting coach. In the second cycle, this average dropped to one question per event which represents an

80% drop in the average number of questions. The sheer number of questions asked by the coaches is important, but even more important is the type of questions that were asked and the type of responses they elicited.

Reflective questions demand that an individual engage in thoughtful analysis of their own practices and/or perspectives. The use of reflective questioning in coaching is strongly supported in the literature (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Crane, 2002). Of the total amount of questions posed from the group to the presenting coach in cycle one, 31% of the questions could be classified as reflective type questions and in only four of the eight events did the coaches ask more than one reflective question to the presenting coach. In the second event, only *one* reflective question was asked across the eight events. When reflective questions were posed to the presenting coaches they included inquiries such as: "What do you do with this information?"; "How do you think you would do the pre-conference differently?"; "If you have a coaching session and they ask for a focus that isn't a problem; what do you do?"; and "How would you push her to move on beyond management?" These reflective questions pushed the presenting coach to reflect on actions and to think deeply about future changes. Unfortunately, as the observations suggest, most questions were clarifying questions and reflective questions few and far between in the coaching of the coaches events. Since the use of reflective questions in coaching is a key aspect of coaching (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Crane, 2002), the lack of improvements in the number of reflective questions asked from cycle one to cycle two raises concerns about whether the aspiring school leaders actually understand how to ask these important types of questions.

Providing feedback in the coaching of the coaches event. Along with the importance of asking questions that demand reflective thought, the amount and type of feedback that was provided to the presenting coach was a crucial issue for coaching development. Observations of the events suggested that the feedback provided to the presenting coach was limited. The problems commonly fell into three categories: (a) absence of constructive feedback on the coaching, (b) only providing positive affirmation about the coaching, and (c) offering too many suggestions to the teacher in the video rather than the coach.

The percentage of feedback directed at the coach on her actions in the videos was much higher in cycle one than cycle two. On average, in the cycle one coaching of the coaches event, 4.6 suggestions/ideas/strategies were provided, with 59.4% directed at the coach on her coaching. These suggestions commonly focused on areas such as how to set the focus, how to ask different questions to the teacher, how to have a more open conversation with the teacher, how to not work from an agenda, and how to diminish the talking time by the coach. In the cycle two coaching of the coaches event, the average number of suggestions/ideas/strategies dropped down to 1.4 per event with only 27% directed at the actual coaching by the presenting coach. In five of the eight events, the coaches did not provide any suggestions to the presenting coach, and in the other three, only three suggestions were provided to the presenting coach. The majority of the suggestions in cycle two, which was configured as 63% of the total feedback, focused on what the teachers (not the coaches) in the videos should do differently.

The findings from the events demonstrate a lack of constructive feedback provided to the presenting coaches, especially in cycle two. These findings were echoed

by the sentiments of the participants in the interviews that took place after the culmination of the coaching program. A common theme that emerged from their responses was that they did not get very many constructive critiques of their coaching or critical feedback from their peers. One participant summed up the feedback she received as:

> To be honest, I didn't get a whole lot of constructive criticism. What I got was "That's pretty good." And I mean I don't want to say I did a great job because I don't know if I did or not, but I didn't get too much like, "Hey you maybe want to try this differently next time."

In addition to them not receiving constructive feedback from the other coaches in the event, another theme that emerged from the aspiring school leaders was this notion of being given a lot of 'good jobs.' One of the participants explained she did not feel comfortable criticizing her peers in class. She furthered this point by sharing that students in the course took the attitude that "I'll reserve my criticism for the person who's actually not in the room." Participants noted how difficult it was to criticize or even provide constructive feedback to their friends in the class and that it was much easier to be critical of the teacher in the videos than their peers.

One participant succinctly summarized the issues with the coaching of the coaches events in that "it's a bunch of rookies coaching a bunch of other rookies and so they don't know either." As this participant points out, these aspiring school leaders were only beginning their journey of development in the realm of instructional coaching. To expect these coaches to provide coaching to each other in these events when they are not yet comfortable with their own coaching skills was a limitation. As one aspiring school

leader said, there was a need for an outside expert on coaching to be a part of these coaching of the coaches events. For this participant, an outsider's expertise, which the aspiring school leaders were lacking, would have been more beneficial to their development of coaching than their coaching of each other.

The feedback provided from the coaches to the presenting coach represented a lack of understanding as to how the coaching of the coaches events were supposed to be enacted. Rather than concentrating on the presenting coaches' actions and skills in the videos, the coaches concentrated their feedback on the teachers in the videos. Furthermore, when feedback was provided, it commonly was given in positive affirmations of the coaches' skills, even when the coaches did not necessarily feel as though their work warranted this affirmation. The aspiring school leaders were looking for constructive feedback so as to build their coaching practice, and yet received very little of this form of feedback.

Summary of the challenges to the development of coaching skills. The ELDA coaching program provided both supports and challenges to the development of coaching skills for the aspiring school leaders. This section examined the aspects of the coaching program that limited the aspiring school leaders' development of coaching skills and instructional leadership capacity. The challenges were in two main areas: (a) the pedagogy and instruction in the course provided a structure to coaching that limited the organic nature of coaching and (b) the coaching of the coaches events were limited in their impact on the development of the aspiring school leaders. So although development was evident in the aspiring school leaders coaching skills, these two aspects of the coaching program limited development of these skills and impacted their perspectives on

coaching and instructional leadership. These perspectives are integral to the ability of the aspiring school leaders to put their learning and skill development into practice in the education system. The impact of the coaching program on the perspectives of the aspiring school leaders thus warrants further consideration, which will be examined in the section to follow.

The Impact of the Coaching Program on Perspectives

The perspectives or 'mental models' (Senge, 2006) of the aspiring school leaders were stretched by the ELDA coaching program. Senge (2006) defines mental models as "deeply engrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action" (p. 8). A person's mental models or perspectives are built out of their own experiences as well as their social interaction with other members of the community. Senge theorizes that when people are faced with new perspectives, the "new insights fail to get put into practice because they conflict with deeply held internal images of how the world works, images that limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting" (p. 163). Senge develops this point by stating that: "until prevailing assumptions are brought into the open, there is no reason to expect mental models to change." (p. 189). Helsing et al. (2008) extend this idea further in noting:

> As [individuals] experiment with new, more effective behaviors, participants work toward forming new relationships to the commitments and assumptions that underlie them. These increasingly complex abilities signal the kind of transformative change that is often necessary for their success. (p. 459)

In relating this literature to the coaching program, if the aspiring school leaders are not

able to challenge their previously held perspectives on instructional leadership, then it will prove difficult to put new learning into action.

The obvious goal of the coaching program was to enable these aspiring school leaders to put into action the knowledge and skills they learned in the program. To this point, Berger (2006) theorizes: "from a developmental perspective, real growth requires some qualitative shift, not just in knowledge, but in perspective or way of thinking" (p. 79). Thus, for this coaching to take hold in the practices and actions of the aspiring school leaders, a transformative change in their perspectives was necessary. The coaching program provided the aspiring school leaders the opportunity to broaden their perspectives on instructional leadership, but did not go far enough. A comment made by one of the aspiring school leaders illustrates this point. She noted how difficult it was to change the 'regimented institutionalized' management practices that she had experienced within the education system. For this aspiring school leader, practices and perspectives had been fixed in her mind – a reality that seemed to be true for the aspiring school leaders in general.

To express the impact of the coaching program on the perspectives of the aspiring school leaders, four perspectives were examined. These perspectives center on coaching as an aspect of instructional leadership capacity and were the most commonly discussed topics by the aspiring school leaders during the coaching program. Many of these discussions that elucidated their perspectives took place within the coaching of the coaches events as the aspiring school leaders engaged with each other about how to address coaching as an instructional leadership practice. These perspectives were: (a) principals are in the classroom for evaluation purposes, (b) there is an 'us' versus 'them'

mindset in education, (c) principals should not be instructional coaches, and (d) coaches need content knowledge/expertise to be effective. Each of these perspectives demonstrates the manner in which the coaching program challenged the aspiring school leaders' perspectives on coaching and instructional leadership, but did not necessarily transform their previously held perspectives on instructional leadership.

Principals are in the classroom for evaluation. One of the most discussed perspectives regarding the use of coaching in education settings involved the role of principals when they come to observe teachers in the classroom. The participants shared the common perspective of teachers and administrators that the role of the principal in a classroom is for evaluative purposes. For this perspective to change, one participant stated that it would take "a complete overhaul of our evaluation system," and arguably our education educational system. Another participant stated that she needed to find a way in which her teachers "don't see [her] as just an evaluator." The participants in general noted the difficulty in attempting to change this mindset of teachers and administrators that observation was for evaluation purposes only.

In regards to this difficulty in breaking the mold of these perspectives, one participant admitted that she took an evaluative approach to the first cycle of coaching because she told the teacher how to change rather than asking for the teacher's thoughts and reflections on the issues. According to the participant, evaluative practice within coaching was grounded in her own experiences as a teacher working with principals. Participants explained that the 'institutionalized perspective' of current evaluator practices is where the principal comes in once a year, evaluates the teacher's instruction, and then months later sends feedback in a standard district evaluation form is the

complete opposite of what the coaching aims to do. One participant explained the issue with this current perspective on observation and evaluation in the following way:

> It's like standardized testing that you give that test to the student once a year and that's supposed to tell you how much they know and what they can do. When I go in and evaluate you once a year I'm supposed to be able to tell from that lesson what kind of a teacher you are. It's the best lesson you've ever done and it's the same one you do every year when I evaluate you.

Although some participants recognized that this mental model is the complete opposite of what the coaching model in ELDA aims to support, it is likely that these entrenched perspectives were working against their learning. Many of the coaches talked about how they were still struggling to grasp a hold of this changing perspective and were worried about whether or not they would be able to get others at their school site to change their commonly held perspectives of principal as evaluator.

There is an 'us' versus 'them' mindset in education. Part of the issue involved in changing the perspective of the principal as evaluator is due to another currently held perspective within education. This perspective places teachers and administrators at opposite ends of the spectrum and suggests that the two groups are not working together, but rather it is a case of 'us' versus 'them.' One participant acknowledged this issue:

> [There will be] difficulty with certain teachers that would be reluctant to have you in the room just because you're the principal, but I think it's a cultural thing, right? [There is] a culture of us and them in a lot of schools – the principal being them.

This cultural norm of pitting principal versus teacher is built from a notion, as one participant noted – that "teachers still fear principals, I mean just the title, that authority figure. They still feel unease to have a principal in the classroom." This is understandable on one level since teachers are held accountable by the principal for improved test scores. According to the participants, this perspective is fueled by defensiveness on the part of the teachers, especially when faced with criticisms from the principal. The impact of this defensiveness was echoed by participants who suggested that this might be the hardest obstacle of all to overcome in bringing coaching into schools.

The participants as a whole talked about the merits of coaching and the impact that it could have on the relationships between teachers and coaches. One aspiring school leader felt that "morale is going to be a lot higher if the teachers are no longer looking at it as the 'us and them' type relationship." This person elaborated by suggesting that in an 'ideal school setting' coaching would happen constantly and consistently. Despite their thoughts on changing the 'us' versus 'them' perspective between a teacher and a principal, the group as a whole was finding it difficult to imagine changing the perspectives of the teachers on their staff whose perspectives are crucial to the success of coaching.

Principals should not be instructional coaches. According to four of the eight aspiring school leaders, they are not certain that a principal can even be a coach. Trying to upend and change commonly held perspectives about the relationship between principals and coaches, these aspiring school leaders were struggling with the idea of whether or not a principal can really be a coach. As a whole, this group of participants

noted the positive impact of coaching as a professional development tool for teachers and many referenced the need for instructional coaching to be a part of the developmental repertoire of the education system. However, although the use of coaching in schools warranted consideration, some of the participants questioned whether the principal was the right person to take on this task. The perspectives of the students in the course on this matter were succinctly addressed by one of the participants who pointed out that her classmates "could not see it, they could see it in the way where they would bring coaches in, but they themselves did not see themselves as being able to facilitate it." There were a number of reasons that emerged from the participants as to why a principal perhaps should not also serve as a coach.

The first involved the time needed to take on coaching with a staff of teachers. Participants noted the already steep demands on principals in schools and were worried that there would not be enough time in the workday to take on this role. Part of this time issue was related to the fact that for many of these aspiring school leaders, coaching was a lock-step, structured process that had to be followed per Knight's (2007) work. Instead of seeing coaching as a method for working with teachers through the various skills associated with coaching, the process as a whole was daunting to a principal already short on time. Another reason cited by the participants was due to the pre-existing mindset of the principal as evaluator. Although this perspective has already been addressed in this section, the notion that the principal would be both evaluator and coach might lead to some 'safe' practices by teachers according to the participants. As one participant suggested, "knowing that that's also the person who evaluates you, I think you hold a little back and you plan your best lesson." This can impact the emerging nature of

coaching and limits the possibility of building an open and trusting relationship that is a key tenet of instructional coaching.

Three of the aspiring school leaders in their post-coaching interviews also talked about the fact that the main text in this course (Knight, 2007) specifically addressed the coach and principal as two separate entities. The text that was supposed to be guiding these aspiring school leaders to become coaches was in the same breath reinforcing their thinking that principals could not be coaches. Despite other literature, such as Darling-Hammond et al. (2010), that refers to coaching as a key tenet of instructional leadership, the aspiring school leaders were only familiar with the main text they were reading from. Knight directly states that coaches and principals were not one and the same and that they should work in collaboration to support teachers' growth.

The final reason to emerge from the participants was in regards to the pre-existing mindset of administrators that they need to be in control of their school. This need for control particularly with their staff does not fit well with the tenets of coaching. One of the participants who shared her thoughts about this issue explained that while there is "the need to control all aspects of any relationship or process, those are limited and it's unrealistic." And yet, the perspective of the role of the principal to be in control was pervasive and infringed on the aspiring school leaders' willingness to let go in a coaching situation. It was evident that the participants in this study understood the impact that coaching could have on a teacher's instruction, but they were still struggling to reconcile the perspective that principals could be coaches.

Coaches need content knowledge/expertise to be effective. The participants in this study struggled with the notion that a principal, if they are to be an effective coach,

must have subject content knowledge. This perspective was one of the most discussed issues regarding coaching during the coaching of the coaches events and in the interviews. It also provided the most mixed sentiments in terms of how the coaches looked at content knowledge in relation to coaching. Four of the eight participants cited not having content knowledge as a weakness in their coaching skills, two coaches suggested that content was not important, while another coach said that having content knowledge should be low on a coach's priority list. This aspiring school leader commented that "an instructional coach having good content knowledge matters more to the teacher than it does for the actual coaching going on." Stober's (2006) thoughts regarding content knowledge suggests that it is not necessary for effective coaching. Stober writes:

> The coach's role is that of facilitator, rather than subject matter expert or more experienced guide. Coaches need to be experts at the *process* of coaching but recognize their clients are the experts on the *content* of their own experience. (p. 20)

Reiss (2007) writes that instructional coaches should not worry about the content matter, but rather be concentrating on the individual they are coaching. To both Reiss and Stober, the content is not as important as other aspects of coaching.

The aspiring school leaders, however, were not provided either of these texts in the course curriculum. Instead, as was described previously, their knowledge on coaching came directly out of Knight's (2007) work. Since Knight places content knowledge as one of the 'Big Four' focus areas for coaching processes, the aspiring school leaders understood content knowledge to be an integral feature of instructional

coaching. Stemming from their focus on Knight's work, the aspiring school leaders in this study were passionate in their views on the role of content knowledge in coaching. In one event, coaches asserted that if they were a teacher and a coach came into their room without knowledge in the content area they would tell them to get out of the room. Although one participant did not go quite that far with her statement, she expressed that "a lot of times it kills me when a lot of leaders aren't that knowledgeable about that [subject] because it's harder for me to take advice from [them]." However, participants did acknowledge that having content knowledge of all areas and subjects might be unrealistic, as one stated, "I don't think it's realistic at any level, whether it's elementary, middle, or high school you can go in there and have the knowledge of exactly what people are teaching. There's just no way."

Although the general consensus was in favor of the coach having content knowledge, one participant offered an alternative perspective suggesting that it might actually be better to not have content knowledge for coaching. This aspiring school leader suggested that if content is 'out the window' and "if it's not a subject you're familiar with, then you're really looking for particular behaviors, as opposed to looking [at the teaching of the specific subject matter]. It's hard not to look at the big picture." From this perspective, not basing one's observations on just the content would allow the coach to look more objectively at instruction in the classroom more holistically. Despite the aspiring school leaders' struggles with the importance of content knowledge for an instructional coach due to the focus of the learning in the course on Knight's (2007), none of the teachers that they were working with chose to focus on content knowledge in the

coaching cycle. So despite the persistent discussions of this topic, the need for this knowledge did not surface in these coaching cycles.

Summary of the coaching program's impact on perspectives. As these aspiring school leaders were developing their skills as instructional coaches, they brought with them perspectives about coaching including who should be a coach, how other stakeholders in the education system would perceive instructional coaching from a principal, and what a coach needed to know. In the coaching program the aspiring school leaders were exposed to new perspectives that were challenging their previously held beliefs. The coaching program offered a different style of instructional leadership than the aspiring school leaders had previously experienced. It is at this point that the transformation of perspectives is possible (Helsing et al., 2008; Senge, 2006), however, due to the challenges in the coaching program discussed in a previous section, such as the pedagogy of instruction, the course curriculum focused primarily on one text, and the limitations of the coaching of the coaches events, the aspiring school leaders remained entrenched in their mental models. While the aspiring school leaders admitted some excitement regarding the use of coaching in schools and broadening of their learning to the point that they were questioning their previously held perspectives, it was not enough to completely transform these perspectives.

Overall Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the development of instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders in a principal preparation program. This study was particularly interested in the development of instructional coaching skills that are associated with instructional leadership and the requisite

transformation of perspectives on instructional leadership in order to put these new skills into practice. During the post-program interviews with the eight aspiring school leaders, they all clearly articulated that the ELDA program had an overall definitive impact on their coaching development, but because of some aspects of the program, their growth was limited. The findings in this study backed the sentiments expressed by the aspiring school leaders.

The coaching program did support the aspiring school leaders' development of coaching skills including their use of feedback, questions, and dialogue with the teacher as well as their ability to observe the teacher's instruction. The coaching program also contained certain aspects – the pedagogy and curriculum in the course and the coaching of the coaches events – that limited the aspiring school leaders' development. As a result of these supports and limitations, the aspiring school leaders' perspectives on coaching and instructional leadership were challenged, but did not transform completely. As suggested previously, the challenges revealed in this study suggest the need for further consideration and discussion regarding how to improve and modify the coaching program. In the following chapter, these areas in particular, will be addressed as well as the implications of these findings for future study.

Chapter Five

Implications and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the development of instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders through the acquisition of coaching skills in a principal preparation program. This research study examined a coaching program at the University of San Diego's Educational Leadership Development Academy (ELDA). In order to study the impact of this coaching program on the aspiring school leaders' development, three research questions were utilized:

1) How does the coaching program support the development of coaching skills for aspiring school leaders?
2) What factors challenged the development of coaching skills for aspiring school leaders?
3) What impact did the coaching program have on the aspiring school leaders' perspectives on instructional leadership?

The previous chapter presented the findings based on these three research questions. The findings suggest that the coaching program offered both supports and challenges to the development of the aspiring school leaders' development of instructional leadership capacity. This research found that: (a) the coaching program supported the aspiring school leaders' development of coaching skills, (b) the development of the aspiring school leaders was limited by certain aspects of the coaching program, and (c) the coaching program challenged, but did not necessarily change the aspiring school leaders' perspectives of coaching and instructional leadership.

The findings in this study are discussed in this chapter in terms of the overall impact of the coaching program on the aspiring school leaders' development of instructional leadership capacity. Following a discussion of these conclusions, this chapter provides insight and recommendations as to how the coaching program could be modified for further development of the aspiring school leaders' coaching skills and instructional leadership capacity. Thoughts on future research opportunities associated with the development of instructional leadership capacity and coaching will be shared as will the final implications of this coaching program for the future.

Discussion of the Findings

These aspiring school leaders came into the program with some knowledge and understanding of instructional leadership due to their participation in the ELDA principal preparation program. However, their knowledge of coaching as an instructional leadership tool was limited as they were apt to explain coaching using only general concepts. In addition to this, during the pre-program interviews, the aspiring school leaders shared feelings of awkwardness and concern when faced with the possibility of having to interact with a teacher on instruction. These feelings were most likely based on their lack of actual experience in interacting with teachers in a principal/teacher format. As the participants in this study pointed out, the coaching program was their first opportunity to work individually with a teacher while in the ELDA program. Other experiences in the program, such as their internships, were focused on group interactions where they were leading professional development or participating in staff meetings.

Interacting with teachers is a key factor in instructional leadership and so the aspiring school leaders' lack of pre-existing deep understanding of coaching as an

instructional leadership tool and their lack of experience interacting with teachers meant that they needed opportunities to build this capacity. These aspiring school leaders seemed to be craving the opportunity to work with teachers as demonstrated by the overall excitement they shared in their pre-program interviews about participating in the coaching cycles. The coaching program offered the aspiring school leaders the potential for a richer, deeper understanding of not only coaching, but of instructional leadership. In addition to this, the opportunity to actually work in a one-on-one capacity with a teacher on instruction supported their development as instructional leaders.

Along with the positive developmental aspects associated with this opportunity to coach teachers on instruction emerged two major conclusions regarding the impact of the coaching program on the aspiring school leaders' development. The first conclusion drawn from the findings in this study was that despite their development of coaching skills, the aspiring school leaders struggled with the dichotomy of structured and organic coaching. The second conclusion drawn from the findings developed from their struggles with structured versus organic coaching. The aspiring school leaders exited the coaching program overwhelmed with the thought of trying to replicate the coaching cycles with teachers outside of the confines of the course. In the following pages of this chapter, each of these conclusions will be discussed in detail. Following these discussions, recommendations are provided for modifications to the coaching program to address the findings in this study.

The struggle with the emergent, organic side of coaching. The first conclusion drawn from the findings in this study was that the aspiring school leaders struggled with the organic and emerging side of coaching. It is from this organic and emerging sense

that coaching can be molded and modified to connect to the individualized and differentiated needs of each teacher and it forces decision-making to happen in the moment. Rather than being a single program provided to all teachers in the same fashion as traditional professional development often is, coaching provides unique opportunities for change and creation in its process. And yet, within the ELDA coaching program, the aspiring school leaders were hesitant to let the coaching emerge during the process.

The aspiring school leaders and the instructor relied heavily on the main text in the course, Knight's (2007) *Instructional Coaching*. The aspiring school leaders worked from this text as though it was a pre-determined path of activities that had to be followed in order to 'do coaching.' The process for instructional coaching of a pre-observation conference, observation, and post-observation conference is a key construct of effective coaching (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Dantonio, 2001; Nidus & Sadder, 2011; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Veenman & Denessen, 2001). However, to see this process as a lock-step structure that cannot be deviated from in any manner demonstrates a limited understanding of coaching as an organic, emerging process that allows the teacher and the coach to co-create a developmental process that meets the teacher's needs and developmental levels.

Despite the fact that the aspiring school leaders also read Crane's (2002) book which centers solely on this more organic and emerging side of coaching, the aspiring school leaders remained fixated in structure. This was demonstrated in their struggles to deal with events that did not go the way in which they were supposed to go according to the text. For example, Knight (2007) clearly establishes the purpose and use of a focus to drive the coaching process. The aspiring school leaders established this focus with their

coachee, however, in some of the observations of the teacher's practice, the aspiring school leaders did not find the focus to be something that needed to be addressed. However, instead of modifying the post-observation conference to address the fact that the focus was not a problem that needed to be discussed, the aspiring school leaders still coached the teacher on the focus. Later in the coaching of the coaches events, the aspiring school leaders discussed with peers what to do if something like that occurred. They were clearly wrestling with the aspects of their coaching cycles that did not fit the structure for coaching that they had read about and were clearly trying to follow.

This discussion of the findings surrounding the lack of emergence in the process is not meant to convey that the standard process for coaching in the literature does not work or is not relevant. This is not about changing the process for coaching, but rather it is about the ability to change within the coaching process. Changing within the process is about adjusting to the individual and differentiated cycle that occurs with each and every coaching process. If a coach is solely focused on the adherence to an agenda for coaching, then the aspects that emerge within the process are apt to be missed. This might prove to be a disservice to the coaching process.

The findings suggest that this inability to change during the coaching cycle is partially due to the aspiring school leaders' lack of experience and their surface-level understanding of coaching. The aspiring school leaders had no other body of work, be it experiential or in text, to judge against what they were reading and learning about in the course. Thus, without previous knowledge on the topic of coaching, the aspiring school leaders seemed to lack the confidence to break the pattern of coaching that they had read

about. So instead of allowing the coaching process to emerge from what occurred during the process, the aspiring school leaders remained fixated on not going 'off script.'

This inability to let the coaching have more of an organic nature to it could also be explained by the aspiring school leaders' previous experiences with principals in their own classrooms where they teach. If the aspiring school leaders are accustomed to the traditional evaluation systems that are so common in the education system – a fact they alluded to in their interviews – then they might gravitate to the more structured side of coaching that emulates what they have experienced as teachers. The perspectives and experiences of their own careers as teachers can be difficult to transform and without reading additional texts on coaching, the aspiring school leaders would most likely feel comfort in a coaching process that mirrored their own experiences with a principal.

Learners who are inexperienced in a field tend to gravitate and 'fall in love' with whichever method or learning they are reading about at that time. A relatable metaphor that explains this reliance on structure can be seen in the development of student teachers early in their teaching careers. For student teachers, if they read a book on a certain method of teaching or if they see their master teacher instruct in a certain manner, then often they focus on that new idea and attempt to emulate it. Development comes as they learn and experience more, or in developmental terms as they widen their perspective or are introduced to greater levels of complexity. They begin to filter out previous learning and with more experience, knowledge, and understanding they begin to create their own methods based off the previous methods they had attempted.

It is no different for these aspiring school leaders, who on a regular basis in a preparation program are learning and experiencing new and more complex ideas. Thus,

due to their limited pre-existing knowledge and lack of experience with coaching, the aspiring school leaders find a sense of solace and safety in a structure they are accustomed to. However, this preclusion to replicate and exist within a structure that is comfortable, does not necessarily serve the aspiring school leaders' development well and limits their ability to recognize the emerging and organic qualities of coaching.

Trying to replicate this coaching as a principal. In addition to the aspiring school leaders' infatuation and commitment to the structure of the process, their development was challenged by feeling overwhelmed at having to replicate this coaching process as a principal. The participants in this study struggled mightily with the conundrum of whether or not they could be both principal and coach at a school. This concept of principal as coach, which the coaching program was focused on developing, was questioned throughout the coaching of the coaches events, whole-class discussions, and the post-program interviews. Although some of the aspiring school leaders felt they could accomplish both roles in their future roles as school leaders, the majority of the group struggled with the very concept that this coaching program was trying to instill – the principal serving as an instructional coach.

Although the aspiring school leaders lauded the impact that coaching can have on the development of teachers' instructional practices, many of them saw this impact implemented through instructional coaches as a method of professional development. One participant even mentioned that if she could not be a principal after completion of the ELDA principal preparation program then she would like to find a job as an instructional coach. This insight is a demonstration of the impact of the coaching program in the sense that the aspiring school leaders recognized the positive aspects of

coaching for teacher's instructional practices. However, these thoughts on the dichotomy of coach and principal show the coaching program was unable to instill within the aspiring school leaders that coaching was a part of their roles as instructional leaders.

The idea of a principal serving as an instructional coach was questioned not only on because of what they had read in Knight's (2007) book, but it was also caused by the aspiring school leaders' understanding of the entire coaching cycle they had experienced in the course. To this point, the aspiring school leaders saw these coaching cycles as 'overwhelming' and 'daunting' to take on at a school site with a full staff of teachers. For the aspiring school leaders, coaching was the structured cycle that they were going through in the course. To try to take on a pre-observation conference, observation of the teacher's instruction, and post-observation conference multiple times in the year with multiple teachers was referenced by participants as an overwhelming task. The aspiring school leaders did not see coaching as series of skills (i.e., relationship building, observation, dialogue, asking questions, providing feedback) that they could use separately, but rather as a lock-step process that had to be fully initiated.

A relatable metaphor is a building contractor who has learned a whole set of skills associated with building houses, such as framing, electrical, plumbing, flooring, roofing, dry-walling, and landscaping. If a contractor was to only see these skills as part of the overall process of building a house, they might find it a daunting task to begin. However, if this contractor looked at it as "I have these various skills and I can match these skills to individual jobs where on one house I might need to do some electrical and another I might need to do some plumbing," then the tasks of being a contractor might not be so overwhelming. It is the same way for working with teachers on instruction, as not all

teachers are going to need the entire coaching cycle as learned in this course and not every principal should think they have to go through all the steps. This is a key understanding that should be enunciated in the coaching program so as to not overwhelm the aspiring school leaders.

If the material in this class was presented in a manner whereupon the aspiring school leaders were able to recognize the individual skills they learned and practiced and then use those as needed to fit individual teacher needs, then they would struggle less with the overwhelming nature of implementing an entire structured coaching process. The merits of the coaching process in its entirety are established in the literature and the ability to complete all of the associated steps of the process could have an impact on teacher's instructional practice. However, the aspiring school leaders were so overwhelmed with the time that this process would take that they lacked the ability to see how the individual skills they had garnered in the program could impact their roles as school leaders. Their development of the skills associated with coaching, such as providing feedback, observing teachers' instructional practice and opening dialogue about instruction with teachers can be used regardless of whether the entire coaching process is initiated. This was a key factor missing from the coaching program as the aspiring school leaders struggled to understand the merits of the skills without the entire process.

Recommendations for Future Implementation

It was clear from the participants in this study that the coaching program, and in particular the coaching cycles within it, should have a role in the future of the ELDA program. All eight participants commented positively on the idea of having coaching as

a part of future installments of the program. As one participant stated, "I think it's the direction that we should be going in." Words used by the aspiring school leaders to describe the role of this process for ELDA in the future included 'big,' 'important,' and 'top priority.' The impact, according to the participants, was not only in regards to their skills for working with teachers on instruction, but on the ways in which they looked at instructional leadership and the role of a principal. One of the main reasons cited by some of the participants was that this impact is due to the 'practical' nature of the program involving learning skills that can be taken into the field. One participant stated this idea as she commented that part of their preparation is the "need to know how to deal with real-life situations." This coaching program did assist the aspiring school leaders to develop as future leaders in schools and provided them the opportunity to put theory into practice.

Along with the impact on skills, the coaching program provided an opportunity for development in terms of perspectives and capacities associated with instructional leadership. This is as integral aspect of this coaching process that was not fully developed in the coaching program. Since coaching is a relatively new topic in this field, despite the early writings of Goldhammer (1969) and others, the pre-existing mindsets and perspectives of an administrator's role in classrooms are more prevalent. These pre-existing mindsets are based entirely off of the participants' experiences as teachers with their own principals in archaic evaluation processes and professional development practices. Changing these pre-existing mindsets and perspectives is not an easy task, and yet the coaching program contains within it the capacity to influence these perspectives. The coaches pointed out that the coaching program correlated well with other offerings in

the program and yet it provided a 'different' type of experience in which their eyes were opened to new possibilities for a principal in terms of working with teachers.

A pattern that emerged from the responses by the participants on this topic was that this program offers an opportunity to change the concept of school principal from manager to leader. ELDA is trying to place new leaders into schools and this coaching program is a tool for developing these new leaders who are focused on instructional leadership. One participant in particular stated this point as she voiced that ELDA wants "a new wave of administrators to say, 'Hey we did this, we tried this, we read about it, we researched it, and we want to do this.' " It is this ability to expand the horizons of the students and to engage them in new learning that the coaching program needs to take hold of. For without new opportunities to expand one's perspective, these learners will remain 'stuck' in the perspectives that they enter into the program with. The coaching program contains the capacity to help extend the perspectives of participants, but it will need to be more proactive in constructing this new and important perspective on instructional leadership. Thus the following sections will provide recommendations for changes to this particular coaching program that could also offer guidance for other principal preparation programs interested in implementing a similar program.

Wider variety in the course literature. The three texts that were read for this coaching program, Knight (2007), Gawande (2011), and Crane (2002), were all quality selections for building an understanding of coaching for these aspiring school leaders. Each provided a unique perspective on coaching and offered different voices on the topic of coaching. In the post-program interviews five of the eight participants noted the impact of the readings on their coaching development and yet three of the coaches

commented on there being too much reading for the course. It wasn't necessarily the amount of pages, but more the sense that reading the entire book felt repetitive.

A recommendation for the coaching program is to counter-balance this overload of the three texts by offering more texts that are shorter in length. A plan to introduce more articles, chapters of books, and shorter pieces would prove beneficial to the students' development in two ways. The first is that this would erase the overload of repetitiveness that often occurs in reading an entire book by a single author. The second benefit would be that by reading smaller pieces of literature, the students would be introduced to a wider variety of the literature and perspectives on coaching. Not only would this keep the readings fresh for the students and keep them from feeling overloaded with reading, but it would offer them an opportunity to broaden their perspectives on coaching – what it is and what it can look like. By being introduced to a greater variety of perspectives from experts, the students can gain a deeper understanding of coaching and its nuances. In addition to this, the process would rely less on the expertise of a single text or expert, and instead the aspiring school leaders' coaching styles could emerge out of a mixture of various perspectives and knowledge on the topic.

Class-wide dialogue and discussions on coaching. An additional method of providing a wider variety of perspectives and voices in the instruction of coaching would be to provide more opportunities for class-wide dialogue and discussions. The aspiring school leaders shared their need for more time in discussion about coaching as a class. In observations of the course, it was clear that there was a significant amount of time spent in class discussions, but these discussions mostly came during the front-loading first two sessions of the course. These discussions occurred either through the whole class or

small groups and were centered on the readings for that session. Once the actual coaching of the coaches events began happening in session three, class-wide discussions on the actual coaching process were limited and rare.

There was a need in this coaching program for the aspiring school leaders to be able to talk about successes and failures of their coaching with their peers and the instructor. To this point, many of the coaching of the coaches events involved great discussions about coaching between the group members. These discussions about coaching (i.e., can a principal be a coach, what do you do if the problem the teacher is focusing on isn't a problem in the observation, etc.) often took the place of coaching feedback to the presenting coach.

What these group members were discussing in the coaching of the coaches events would have been better served as large class discussions. And yet, since there was not a space created for these emergent discussions on coaching in other parts of the course, the aspiring school leaders placed them into the events. Thus, a recommendation for future implementations of the coaching program is to provide more opportunities for the class to discuss the coaching cycles as a large group. In particular, there is a need for the course instructor to be able to plan for these discussions in terms of key facets of the coaching cycles that might warrant discussion.

The instructor's ability to know in advance the issues or questions that the aspiring school leaders are going to have, based off of the key points addressed in this study, will support a plan for discussion points throughout the course that directly relate to these key issues and questions in the coaching cycles. In addition, the instructor should be able to align these opportunities for discussion and dialogue around the

expected outcomes of the coaching program and the instruction in the course. Through the guidance of the course instructor, students will be able to engage in dialogue with peers who are going through the same process. This type of learning supports the development of perspectives and capacities for aspiring school leaders and provides them the opportunity to delve into the topics that are weighing heavily upon their minds.

More modeling of coaching. In addition to general discussions and open dialogue about coaching so as to provide even greater opportunities for development, there is a need for more modeling of coaching. This was the most discussed needed change to the coaching program by the participants in this study. All of the aspiring school leaders noted that watching the two videos of Jim Knight coaching (Teaching Channel, 2011a, 2011b) was truly beneficial in their development of coaching. Yet these videos were not enough for the students as all eight participants noted their interest in watching more videos on coaching and having more coaching modeled for them. They all noted the great impact that watching their peers' coaching videos had on their own coaching skills, but imagine the impact if the students were presented with this modeling earlier in the course rather than after the first cycle had begun.

Strategies that were suggested by the group to meet this need for more modeling included watching coaching process videos from former ELDA students, watching a video of a teacher's instruction together as a class and then having a discussion about how to coach that teacher, and having principals who coach their teachers come in to present to the class. One aspiring school leader suggested using student teachers' videos that credential students create during their credential process for class-wide coaching.

An additional area where modeling was needed was in the coaching of the coaches events. As suggested earlier, these events did not live up to the potential they had to impact development; a possible explanation for this is the lack of experience for the students in terms of how to conduct these events. If these events had been modeled to the class as a whole the issues that were seen with the events may have subsided in that the coaches would have known what they were supposed to do. Parallel to the use of an instructional video to model and learn how to coach a teacher, a similar approach could be taken in terms of learning how to conduct this fulcrum event between the two cycles. The class as a whole could watch a video of a coaching pre-conference and post-conference and then all work together through discussion and dialogue to analyze how to coach this coach on her coaching.

Bringing in outside experts and practitioners. Along with the use of modeling and coaching as a class, bringing in outside experts and practitioners from the field of coaching to present to the class is a recommended addition to the coaching program. This idea was presented by a couple of the aspiring school leaders in the post-program interviews. Their thoughts were that it would be great to hear from actual principals in the field who were coaching their staffs on instruction. Dialoguing with a principal who was actively coaching her teachers would allow for the aspiring school leaders to deal with some of the issues they were having with whether coaching was even realistic for a school site administrator. As one participant noted, by bringing in practitioners, the students can recognize that the coaching process is not 'just research,' but it is actually something happening in real time in the educational system.

The ELDA program is based on the cohort system, where the same group of aspiring school leaders moves through the program together taking the same classes and experiencing the same facets of the program. In Scribner and Donaldson's (2001) work on learning in cohorts, they have found that group dynamics have a major impact on learning in a cohort. Scribner and Donaldson suggest that there are tensions within any cohort that can often limit the effectiveness of the group's performance or learning. They argue that "the dynamic of a cohort group must be attended to in order to ensure that learning experiences for all cohort students are maximized" (p. 628). In cohorts no one wants to be responsible for disrupting the perceived cohesiveness of the group and so it leads to a lack of outside perspective and undermines efforts to broaden perspective and deepen knowledge. As one participant shared about the coaching program:

> I just felt I wasn't stretched too much and I guess the whole comfort zone thing – I was never like, felt out of my comfort level, and I think there were multiple opportunities, but we just didn't get to them.

Outside voices and perspectives, especially from experts in the field of coaching, would provide the opportunity for these aspiring school leaders to reflect on their own perspectives, think outside of the cohort 'box,' and to readjust their thoughts and beliefs through the new perspectives that would be offered to them. The use of outside voices and perspectives would greatly enhance the learning of the aspiring school leaders in the program.

Re-envisioning the coaching of the coaches events. As mentioned previously, the coaching of the coaches event did not end up as the key fulcrum event in the development of the students as it was hypothesized to be when this program began.

There is a definite need to re-envision this aspect of the program so as to better develop the opportunity that it can hold for development of coaching skills. There are a number of possibilities for modifications to the coaching of the coaches events that could help to strengthen the impact of this part of the coaching program.

The first idea is to model the coaching of the coaches event with the whole class prior to the events occurring in class. This could be accomplished through the whole class watching a video of a coaching pre-conference and post-conference and then all working together to coach the coach in the video. This would provide a great opportunity to learn how to conduct this part of the process and what is appropriate and effective for the coach's development. According to the participants, the coaching of the coaches events lacked the constructive criticism and feedback that was needed for the aspiring school leaders to develop their practice. These aspiring school leaders needed to have a model that showed them that constructive, critical feedback was not only okay, but was also necessary.

A second recommendation to provide more effective coaching of the coaches events is for the course instructor to have a more vocal presence in the groups. Observation of these events showed that the course instructor took more of a passive role in these events, allowing the groups to work on their own through the event process. The course instructor would interject at times during these events, however the interjections were commonly focused on getting the group of students 'back on track' when their conversations had moved away from coaching. The course instructor can have a vital role in providing the groups more feedback especially in terms of asking reflective questions to the group. This form of questioning could enable the groups of coaches to

take these events to the next level of analysis, feedback, and coaching. If the instructor was able to provide feedback and coach the groups in a parallel manner to how the coaches were expected to coach each other, this could provide expertise and modeling for the aspiring school leaders during these events.

In addition to these points, there is a definite need to better explain the expectations and norms for these events. The coaching of the coaches events were scattered all over the place in terms of how they were organized, the conversations that occurred, and the approaches the presenting coach and the other coaches took to the discussions. As part of the modeling of the coaching of the coaches events, the expectations could be co-created by the group as to how these groups should be conducted.

In addition to more modeling and the setting of expectations, there is a need to establish norms for how the videos are shown to the groups. The playback of videos was a major issue that was commented on by all eight participants in this study as something that had to be addressed in the future. Although the participants were more focused on the audio and video issues associated with showing videos on various pieces of technology in a room where other groups were also coaching, the focus of this recommendation is on what parts of the video were shown in the event. The number one issue mentioned was that there was far too much time invested within each event on the showing of the videos, which was explained in detail in the previous chapter. The coaching of the coaches event is not meant to be a presentation of the entire process, and yet as the findings showed, the majority of the time in each event was spent showing the

videos. Thus, the coaches spent too much time passively watching the video rather than actively coaching the presenting coach through analysis and discussion.

In order to address this issue, norms must be set as to how much of each part of the video (i.e., pre-observation conference, observation of instruction, post-observation conference) should be shown. In particular the time spent viewing the teacher's instruction on video should be reduced significantly. This is an important piece to view in terms of the context of the post-observation conference between the teacher and coach. However, watching significant portions of this video, might lead to the coaches providing feedback to the teacher rather than the presenting coach. This was the case in the coaching of the coaches events observed in this study. Instead of focusing their feedback on the presenting coach's practice within the pre- and post-conferences, the coaches in each group instead focused on the teacher's instruction. Now part of this is due to the fact that these coaches were inexperienced in coaching and thus concentrated on aspects of the video with which they had more expertise – the teacher's instruction. A larger part of this issue is that the aspiring school leaders did not understand how to conduct the coaching of the coaches events due to a lack of modeling and norm-setting.

In order to revitalize the coaching of the coaches event in terms of development for the presenting coach, how and when the video of the teacher's instruction is viewed is important. The recommendation is to significantly decrease the time spent showing this video to a few minutes. The presenting coach could find a 'key' piece of the teacher's instruction that was pertinent to the post-observation conference and only show that small piece of video. By only viewing a small portion of this video, and instead watching more of the pre- and post-observation conferences, there is the opportunity to focus the

feedback in the coaching of the coaches event on the presenting coach's coaching rather than the teacher's instruction. The modeling of how these events should be conducted and the setting of norms for the events can have a major positive impact on this event and could possibly restore the status of this event as the key developmental tool for the aspiring school leaders.

Re-examine the coaching partnerships. The final recommendation for improvements to the coaching program is to re-examine the choice in partnerships for this coaching. In the coaching program, the aspiring school leaders were given the choice of who to partner with for this process. As noted in the previous chapter, this choice provided the opportunity for these students, who were new to coaching, to select a 'safe' partner. By selecting a teacher that they already knew and were familiar with, there was not only less risk involved, but more ability for the coaches to control the process. This statement is meant to convey the notion that by working with a friend, the partner teachers were trying to make this a positive experience for the coach so that they would be successful on the assignment. The one coaching partnership where the coach was not familiar with the teacher they were working with proved to contain the most issues, including the fact that the teacher nearly stopped the cycle midway. This aspiring school leader noted how much she learned about coaching through this situation.

So whereas there is great learning in the safe coaching relationships as evidenced in the improvement of coaching skills by the participants, there is also a vast amount of learning and development that can take place in unfamiliar coaching relationships. In addition to this notion, unfamiliar coaching relationships might be the impetus for the aspiring school leaders to develop professional relationships with the teacher they were

working with. As suggested in the previous chapter, there was a need for the aspiring school leaders to develop a professional relationship with the teacher, not just a friendly relationship. This is what the one unfamiliar relationship in the coaching program failed to accomplish that almost led to the demise of the coaching cycle. Although this aspiring school leader shared that what she needed was to have a 'friendly' relationship with the teacher, what was actually needed was the building of a professional relationship, regardless of the level of friendliness between the coach and teacher. This could be accomplished through asking questions about the teacher's goals, experiences, understanding, and perspectives, something that only occurred in one of the relationships in this coaching program.

The relationships of the coaches and teachers in the seven pairings that were familiar with each other do not represent the reality of coaching at a school site. Granted the principal of a school site would be familiar with the teacher they are coaching, but they will not always be friendly with that teacher, nor will the teacher be trying to help the coach succeed. As one participant noted, "the experience we had in this class wasn't really authentic because we all had positive experiences. It'd be nice not to have a positive experience and then really to get feedback." Some of the coaches recognized the possibility for growth by coaching someone they did not know as well and the fact that this type of relationship would better fit the experiences they would have in schools. One of the participants suggested coaching someone they knew well in the first round, but then in the second round choosing "someone that's maybe a mediocre teacher and to go in there and try it out... just to get outside our comfort zone."

The choice in partnerships offers positives for both types of coaching relationships – familiar and unfamiliar – and so it is difficult to make a strict recommendation as to which side to choose. The key is in the reconfiguration of the type of relationship that is needed. This is meant to suggest that it is not about being familiar or unfamiliar with the teacher, but rather the ability to learn to develop a professional relationship between the two sides. This is a key skill that is needed to be better honed through this coaching program, and yet it was not only completely missed in these relationships, it was also completely misunderstood by the aspiring school leaders. Thus, attention must be given to structuring the selection of coaching partnerships around the types of partnerships that will stimulate the development of the skill associated with the building of a professional relationship.

Implications for Future Research

As with any learning program centered on the development of skills, perspectives, and capacities there is always a need for research as to the impact of the process on learning. In particular, there is a need for further study of principal preparation programs. Murphy (2006) writes that "there simply is not much research on the preparatory function in school administration and the research we do have does not seem to be sufficiently powerful to drive change efforts" (p. 67). Levine (2005) strongly summarizes the research on principal preparation programs as "atheoretical and immature; it neglects to ask important questions; it is overwhelmingly engaged in non-empirical research; and it is disconnected from practice" (p. 44). The findings presented in the previous section offer opportunities not only for modifications to this coaching program, but also suggests avenues for future research and evaluation of other programs with similar preparation

objectives. Additional research could provide a deeper understanding of how to improve instructional leadership capacities for aspiring school leaders and could offer greater insight into multiple models of teaching coaching and instructional leadership.

To gain a more thorough understanding of this program, a longitudinal study of these aspiring school leaders could be conducted. As the participants in this study assume leadership positions, it would be instructive to investigate whether or not they took the learning about coaching and were able to apply it into their individual settings. Such an analysis would lend great insight into the true impact of this program. The ultimate goal in researching the effectiveness of principals coaching teachers on instruction is to examine the impact of the coaching on student learning and achievement. One participant even recognized this as she stated that if she were to do this coaching as a principal she "would have looked for evidence of student learning where that wasn't something that we looked at, but as a principal that's always something that you're looking at." A follow-up study could build on this suggestion and use student achievement data to measure coaching effectiveness.

If we acknowledge this form of coaching as an effective professional development practice, then in order to determine its effectiveness, it needs to be connected to student scores and learning (Desimone, 2011; Dufour, 2004; Dufour et al., 2004; Grossman & Hirsch, 2009; Guskey, 2002a; Hirsh, 2009b; Kelleher, 2003; Sparks & Hirsh, 2000; Wei et al., 2010; Yoon et al., 2007). Despite the limitations of using student test score data, as Desimone (2011) suggests, "the final test of the effectiveness of professional development is whether it has led to improved student learning" (p. 71). Although this level of research falls outside of the parameters of this study, it offers a

possibility for future research into the true impact of coaching programs, not only on the aspiring school leaders' skills and capacities for instructional leadership, but also on teachers' instructional practices and ultimately on student learning outcomes.

Implications for the Future

Even as far back as the 1960's, experts in the field such as Goldhammer (1969), argued for bringing teachers and administrators together into processes to improve instructional practice and impact student achievement. As Goldhammer points out, "teachers and supervisors have been separated by hierarchical distance, by frequently conflicting objectives, and by differences in professional focus that have tended to keep supervisors aloof from classroom teaching while the teachers have been constantly up to their ears in it" (p. 332). The positive impact of this coaching program was evident in its ability to bring teachers and coaches together. Despite some areas of the program that were not as effective as others, in an overall sense the fact that the aspiring school leaders were introduced to coaching and had the opportunity to practice this method of instructional leadership with teachers made a difference in their capacity to be an instructional leader.

This impact was never more evident than in the thoughts and perspectives that the participants shared in their final interviews. One aspiring school leader reflected on this idea in the following manner:

> I mean it's just how to be a well-rounded leader, what a leader looks like I guess in the Twenty-First Century. I know it sounds kind of cliché, but it's really what does a leader look like as we move forward? And it's not just the operational and it's not just lesson plans or data collection. It is the relationship and building the

culture and having that positive morale in a school, and this is going to be a necessary part for a principal – and how do you do it and do everything else.

Another participant shared how the coaching program showed her a different way to be a leader and stated: "it's a different dialogue on what you would do as an instructional leader/principal." Another participant expressed her positive connection with the program because it helped her to develop so that she could be "a teacher of teachers." The impact of the coaching program on the perspectives and capacities of these aspiring school leaders was felt throughout the participants.

The impact was also evident in the fact that half of the participants shared that they had already taken coaching back to their own sites. Of these four aspiring school leaders who had 'paid it forward' in terms of putting into action what they had learned through the program, two of them had been asked by their school site principal to take on coaching with teachers on campus who were having difficulty with their instruction. These two coaches were now actively involved in coaching at their school sites. An additional aspiring school leader had been approached by her principal to present coaching at the next administrative team meeting and the fourth was actively coaching her partner teachers in her department. Outside of these four who were actively engaged in implementing what they had learned, two additional aspiring school leaders commented on the fact that they had approached the teacher they had worked with in the cycle about continuing the coaching process into the rest of the school year outside of the parameters of the course. The fact that so many coaches were taking what they had learned and experienced in the course back to their own school sites speaks to the significant impact of this coaching program. For these aspiring school leaders, the

coaching program was not just another 'hoop to jump through' in their preparation, or a form of learning that they would never use, but rather it was something that they were actively seeking to continue doing.

The notion that ELDA was attempting to change the administrators of the future through a focus on instructional leadership was felt by the participants. As one participant noted, "I think overall ELDA is trying to change the current model of administrators so this aligns with changing the current model where current administrators might not view instruction as their number one priority." It is this recognition by the students in the program of what ELDA is attempting to do in preparing not just principals, but 'school leaders,' that is so exciting about the future of administration. Instead of merely seeing this coaching program as an aspect to a required course – simply another item to learn as they travel the road towards school leadership – the students were seeing coaching as something they could do to work with teachers.

This notion of 'paying it forward' or putting into action what they learned speaks to the impact of the coaching program on their development as instructional leaders on school campuses. This coaching program ultimately provides the type of clinical experiences that the literature suggests are instrumental in the development of future principals (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Murphy, 2006; Reames, 2010). Lashway (2006) theorizes that principal preparation programs should be focused on "helping candidates apply course knowledge to real-world contexts (p. 113). Lashway points out that principal programs are attempting to address this through the providing of internship opportunities and 'practicum experiences.' However, as Lashway found, these experiences usually occur in the following scenario: "a student is assigned a

hodgepodge of low-level tasks and lose ends that the regular administrator hasn't gotten around to" (p. 113). Prior to their participation in the coaching program, the aspiring school leaders had experienced Lashway's 'hodgepodge of low-level tasks' in their internships. The coaching program though offers the opportunity for the aspiring school leaders to take what they are learning in ELDA into real-life contexts. These opportunities to not only develop skills associated with instructional leadership, but to actually work one-on-one with teachers on their instruction is what makes the coaching program so intriguing as a method of developing instructional leadership capacity and preparing the school leaders of the Twenty-First Century.

Contextual implications of coaching by instructional leaders. This form of professional development and instructional leadership is never more reticent than in the current changing reality of the educational system. As more and more schools dive head first into the digital era of education, there is a need to also change the way in which teachers develop. The traditional forms of professional development are no longer capable of building the instructional capacities of teachers to fit this changing era that is moving so quickly. To keep up with the changing times, there is a need to change the way teachers are developed and the way that school leaders support this development. The digital era of getting technology into every child's hand would be mired in ineptitude if traditional methods of instruction are still used in this new interface.

Further accentuating the need for coaching is the idea that as the digital era takes hold, a great many teachers are going to struggle with the changes. Ranging from defensiveness to a lack of interest in changing to a lack of skills and confidence in technology, teachers are going to be frustrated, downtrodden, and alienated by the

changing system. These teachers need someone or something that can support them and their individual and differentiated needs. These teachers need someone to enable their development of instruction to match the new learning occurring on in schools. They need professional development opportunities that fit the changing world of education and their own individual needs, interests, and developmental levels.

Due to the diversity in developmental levels and adult learning processes, for professional development to be more effective, it should be individualized and differentiated to fit their needs and developmental levels (U.S. Department of Education, 2011; Zepeda, 2008). The teaching force represents multiple levels and stages of adult development (Erikson, 1980; Kegan, 1982; Wilber, 2000; 2001), as well multiple levels of stages of teacher and career development (Burden, 1982; Dubble, 1998; Fuller, 1969; Watts, 1980), and various preferred learning process (Merriam et al., 2007). If professional development is not tailored to meet these differences in an individualized manner, then the possibilities of reform in the digital era will fall to the side, unclaimed and misused.

Coaching provides the opportunity in professional development to connect with the individuality of the teacher. As one participant noted, "coaching is something that can benefit any profession and so the fact that there is a method for teachers to be coached, I think is beneficial." Coaching provides an avenue to build relationships that strengthen the overall culture of a school. This culture is never more important than in an era of great change, for it provides the common ground and linkage of staff members who are at varying levels of change. To support change requires a shift in the commonly held perspectives of the various educational stakeholders.

Throughout the coaching program, the aspiring school leaders seemed to recognize that their own perspectives on school leadership and coaching were beginning to change. However, the common struggle all of the aspiring school leaders experienced and perhaps the greatest challenge of all was in regards to the pre-existing mindsets and perspectives these aspiring school leaders held about the educational system. Throughout the program, while they were demonstrating some change in perspectives, they consistently seemed to pull themselves back from ways of thinking about the role of the principal, coaching, and instructional leadership. It was as if they did not believe that the change they were seeing was possible outside of the confines of this program and this course, and so they remained 'stuck.' Rather than being truly transformative and trying to bring others with them, many seemed hesitant to this cause. It was as though the chasm between teacher and administrator was too large and the task of transformative change would be too difficult to bring the two sides together into a new perspective that could change the relationship of the two sides.

For coaching to become a way of life in schools, school leaders must take an active role in providing opportunities to change these perspectives. One participant noted that change for teachers was problematic as well:

> [Teachers] really are all alone in a room all day long and it feels really unnatural when somebody else is in there, it feels and you really are it's your own little kingdom and you do things you're way over time.

Reassessing pre-existing perspectives in light of new knowledge and understanding, going deeper and being more reflective about what is needed to build capacity demands a change in mental models. Coaching as a professional development tool offers this

opportunity and so regardless of whether principals are active instructional coaches or if they hire coaches as a professional development design, starting this dialogue about change is integral. As one participant noted, what she learned in this process is a:

> Humanistic approach to administration so in your discussion with them they see that you were a teacher, you are a coach, you're not there putting checkmarks in boxes, and x's in other boxes, where ultimately it's going to affect whether or not they have a job.

For it is not just about changing perspectives, it is about making connections to teachers in a manner that addresses their individualized and differentiated selves.

Coaching as a professional development tool is built on this 'humanistic' approach. Although it is debatable as to whether school leaders can actually accomplish these processes with teachers, due to pre-existing mindsets and perspectives within the system and the numerous expectations and roles of administrators, the use of the skills associated with this coaching program has the potential to impact the instructional practices of teachers. An impact on teachers' instruction directly impacts student learning outcomes, which ultimately is the goal of any professional development practice. The possibilities that coaching provides are endless, including allowing school leaders to truly make a difference on their campus, both in the lives of their teachers and students. This coaching program enabled aspiring school leaders to not only build the skills associated with coaching, but to also begin to reassess their own thoughts and perspectives on instructional leadership. They are arguably better prepared to be the kind of school leaders needed for Twenty-First Century schools.

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APPENDIX A:

Email Solicitation to Participants

Hello _____,

My name is John Franey, and I am a Leadership Studies doctoral student here at the University of San Diego's School of Leadership and Education Sciences. For my dissertation, I am conducting a research study on the development of instructional leadership capacity within a principal preparation program. In particular I will be looking at the development of this capacity through the coaching process you will be participating in during your ELDA course this semester. This coaching process which is a required assignment within your course, pairs each ELDA student with a teacher candidate in a videotaped process of observation and coaching.

Participation in this study entails my observation of the videotapes you create of your coaching process as well as you providing a copy of the notes that you take during your observations in the coaching process. The coaching process will be videotaped according to the requirements set forth by your professor in the course syllabus. Additionally your participation in the research study will include individual interview sessions with me before and after the coaching process, which will each last approximately one hour. Activities within these interview sessions include drawing concept maps on topics related to instructional leadership and answering a series of video-elicited interview questions, hypothetical-interaction interview questions, and semi-structured interview questions on your perspectives of the coaching process.

Although this coaching process is a requirement in your course, your participation in this study is not a requirement. Thus, your participation in the study will have no impact on your grade in the course and will be kept confidential.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email and I look forward to working with you to develop a better understanding of the development of instructional leadership capacity within a principal preparation program. For more information on the study or to agree to participate, please contact me at [redacted] or through my email at [redacted].

Sincerely,

John Franey

Ph.D. Candidate, University of San Diego
School of Leadership and Education Sciences

APPENDIX B:

Research Participant Consent Form

University of San Diego
Institutional Review Board

Research Participant Consent Form

For the research study entitled:
Coaching Teachers on Instruction: Developing Instructional Leadership Capacity within a Principal Preparation Program

I. Purpose of the research study

John J. Franey is a Ph.D. student in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences at the University of San Diego. You are invited to participate in a research study he is conducting. The purpose of this research study is to explore the development of instructional leadership capacity for aspiring school leaders through a coaching process.

II. What you will be asked to do

If you decide to be in this study, you will be asked to:

1) Fill out a demographic survey about your background and experience
2) Fill out five concept maps on topics related to instructional leadership
3) Participate in an initial private audiotaped interview session which will include five video-elicited interview questions about observing teachers and five hypothetical-interaction interview questions about your perspectives of instructional leadership
4) Participate in a seven step coaching process with a teacher candidate (which is already a part of your ELDA course) that will be video-taped
5) Turn in notes from your observations during the coaching process
6) Participate in a final private audiotaped interview of twenty questions about your experiences in the coaching process

Your participation in this study will take a total of four hours.

III. Foreseeable risks or discomforts

This study involves no more risk than the risks you encounter in daily life.

IV. Benefits

While there may be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study, the indirect benefit of participating will be knowing that you helped researchers better understand the use of a coaching process in the development of instructional leadership capacity through a principal preparation program.

V. Confidentiality

Any information provided and/or identifying records will remain confidential and kept in a locked file and/or password-protected computer file in the researcher's

office for a minimum of five years. All data collected from you will be coded with a number or pseudonym (fake name). Your real name will not be used. The results of this research project may be made public and information quoted in professional journals and meetings, but information from this study will only be reported as a group, and not individually.

VI. Compensation

If you participate in the study, the researcher will give you a $5 dollar gift card to Starbucks in the following way: in person. You will receive this compensation even if you decide not to complete the entire research study.

VII. Voluntary Nature of this Research

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You do not have to do this, and you can refuse to answer any question or quit at any time. Deciding not to participate or not answering any of the questions will have no effect on any benefits you're entitled to, like your health care, or your employment or grades. **You can withdraw from this study at any time without penalty.**

VIII. Contact Information

If you have any questions about this research, you may contact either:

1) John J. Franey
Email: [redacted]
Phone: [redacted]

2) Lea Hubbard, Ph.D
Email: [redacted]
Phone: [redacted]

I have read and understand this form, and consent to the research it describes to me. I have received a copy of this consent form for my records.

Signature of Participant Date

Name of Participant (**Printed**)

Signature of Investigator Date

APPENDIX C:

Demographic Survey

Demographic Survey

Gender: _____ **Age:** _____ **Years of teaching experience:** _____

Current School Position: _____

School Level that you work at:

_____ Elementary _____ Middle School _____ High School

_____ Other (please specify) _____

Credentials that you hold: ____ Multiple Subject _____Single Subject (please specify below)

_____ Agriculture _____ General Science _____ Mathematics

_____ Art _____ Geosciences _____ Music

_____ Business _____ Health Science _____ Physical Educ.

_____ Chemistry _____ Home Economics _____ Physics

_____ English _____ Languages (not English) _____ Social Science

_____ Industrial & Technology Education

_____ Other (please specify) _____

Previous experience as 'Master Teacher' to a student teacher: _____Yes _____ No

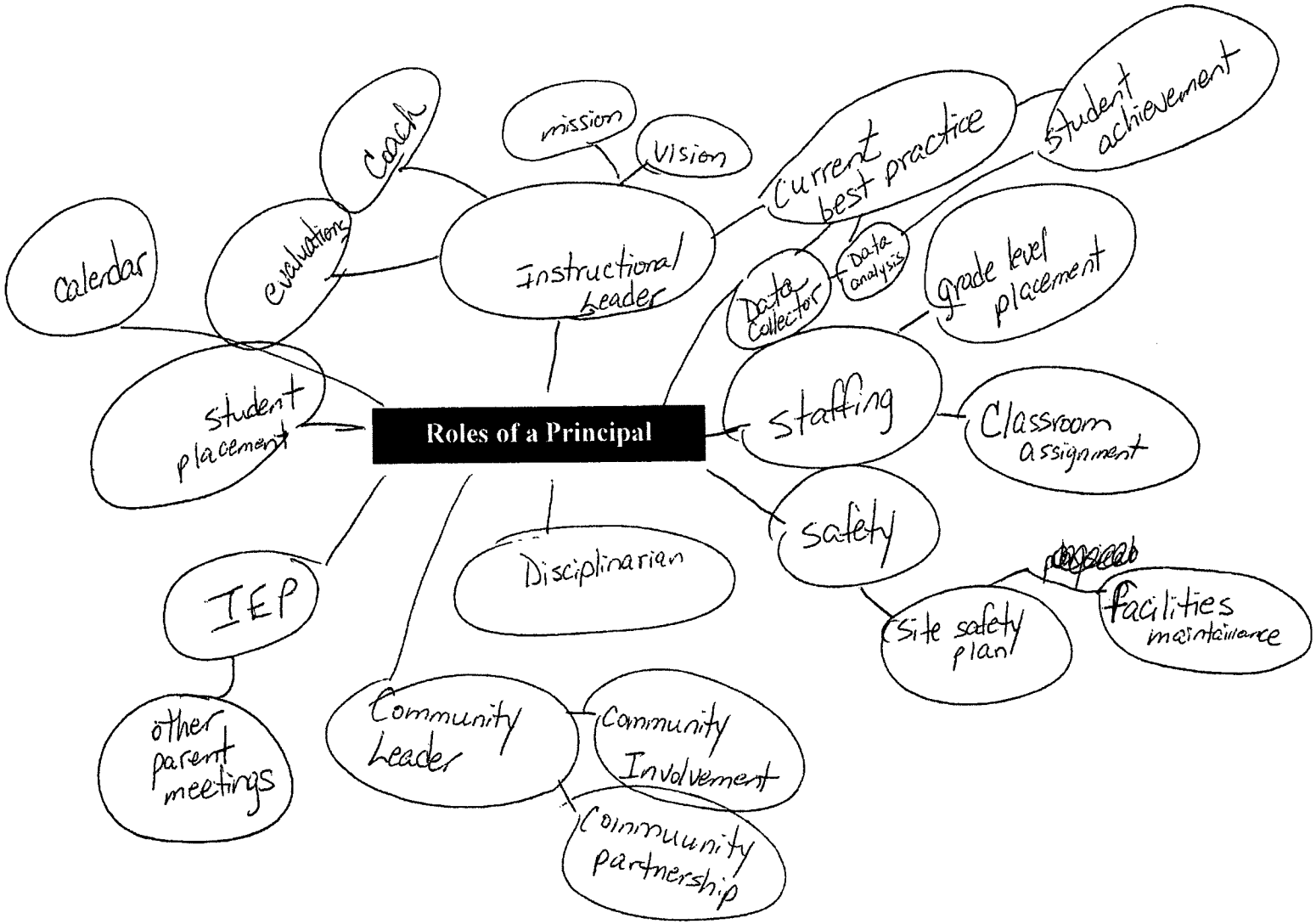
If yes, number of student teachers you have worked with: _____

Previous experience with coaching teachers: _____ Yes _____ No

Have you ever been coached on instruction by a principal: _____ Yes _____ No

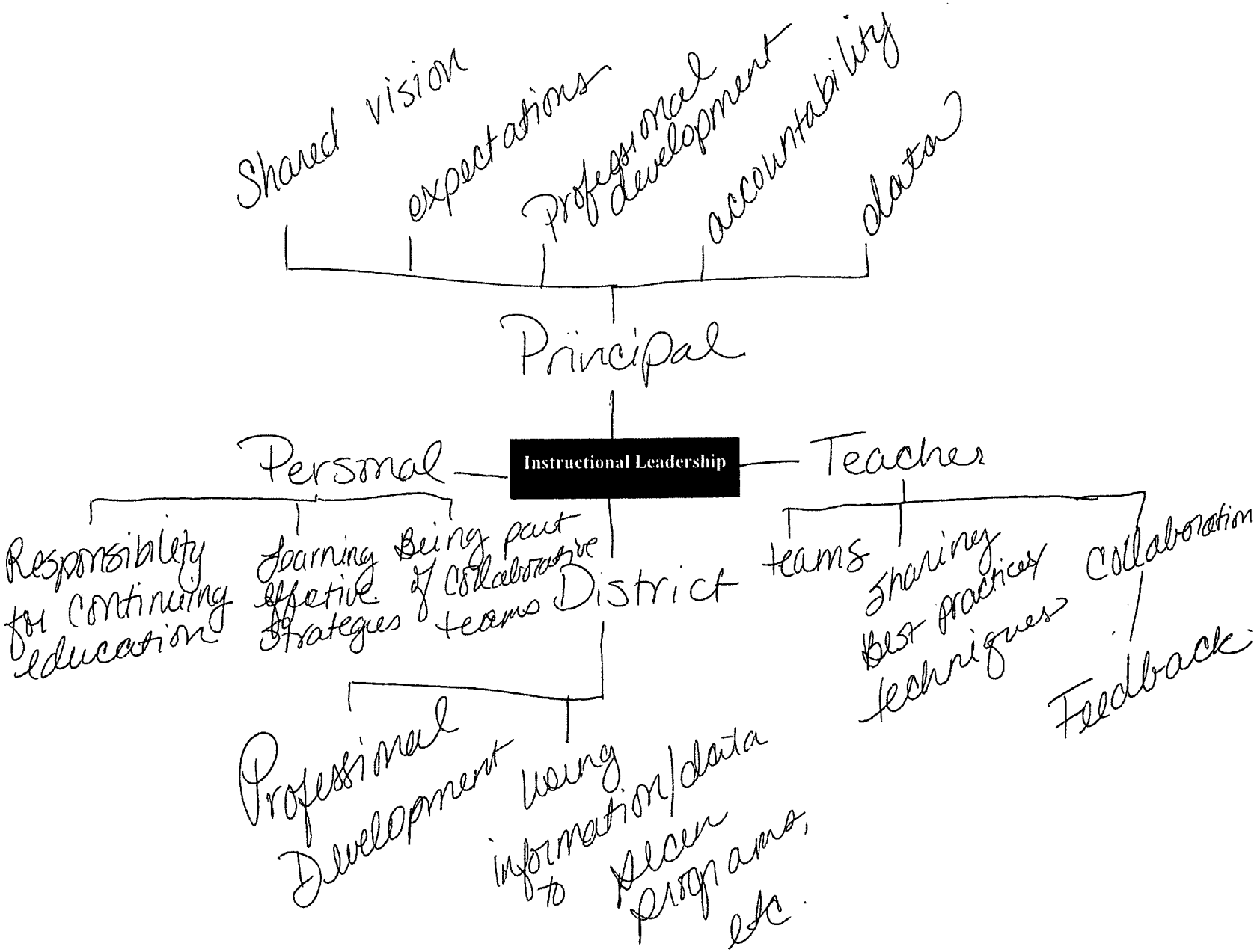
APPENDIX D:

An Example of a Completed 'Roles of a Principal' Concept Map


Roles of a Principal
Instructional Leader
Coach
mission
Vision
evaluations
calendar
Current best practice
Student achievement
Data collector
Data analysis
grade level placement
staffing
Classroom assignment
safety
facilities maintainance
Site safety plan
Disciplinarian
IEP
other parent meetings
Community Leader
Community Involvement
Community partnership
student placement

APPENDIX E:

An Example of a Completed 'Instructional Leadership' Concept Map


Shared vision
expectations
Professional development
accountability
data
Principal
Personal
Instructional Leadership
Teacher
Responsibility for continuing education
learning effective strategies
Being part of collaborative teams
District
teams
sharing best practices techniques
Collaboration
Feedback
Professional Development
Using information/data to plan programs, etc.

APPENDIX F:

An Example of a Completed 'Coaching' Concept Map


Coaching
Feedback
2 way Conversation where you both reflect on what happened in the lesson
No judgement
Keep it positive
Notes for Consideration; things that could be attempted by teacher in the future
Relationship
need to get to know staff on a personal level
discuss things teacher may want to work on
observations
regular informal visits without taking notes
planned observations
look for specific behaviors or practices you have discussed in advance with teacher

APPENDIX G:

Pre-Coaching Phase Interview Protocol

Pre-Coaching Phase Interview Protocol

Hypothetical Interaction Questions

1) Your school site has been recently designated as a program improvement school. The government believes that the professional development of teachers is the key method to school improvement and has provided you funding for this endeavor. As the principal of this school site, what would your professional development design look like?

2) In your examination of the data from state wide testing, you find that a particular teacher has had decreasing student achievement over the last couple of school years. What do you do with this new information?

3) At a recent administrative meeting in your district, your superintendent reminded all principals that one of the roles as a principal is to observe teacher classroom instruction. You decide to put a plan in action to observe teachers during their instruction. What is your approach to these observations?

4) During your observation of teachers you notice one teacher whose instruction is not at the same level of other teachers at the school. You decide that a post-observation conference is needed to discuss the teacher's instructional practice. What is your approach to this conference?

5) You recently attended a professional development conference on instructional leadership for school site administrators. One of the sessions on how to coach teachers towards more effective instruction caught your attention. You are now back on your school site and have decided to start coaching one of your veteran teachers who asked for help with instruction. What is your process for coaching this teacher?

Perspectives Questions

1) What are your overall thoughts of the coaching process as you begin the process?

2) What is the purpose of a coaching process for the teacher?

3) What is the purpose of a coaching process for the administrator?

4) How realistic is a coaching process like this for a school site made up of multiple teachers?

5) Why do you think ELDA has installed this coaching process into its program?

6) What do you expect the outcome of this coaching process to be for you and your development as a school leader?

APPENDIX H:

Post-Coaching Phase Interview Protocol

Post-Coaching Phase Interview Protocol

1) What were your overall thoughts on the coaching experience?
2) What did you find challenging about the coaching process?
3) What were your strengths as a coach?
4) What were your weaknesses as a coach?
5) What aspects of the course helped you to develop your coaching skills?
6) What changes did you make in the second cycle as a direct result of the coaching of the coaches event?
7) What role did your classmates' feedback to you have on your development as an aspiring school leader?
8) How did your coaching benefit the development of the teacher?
9) What was your relationship with the teacher prior to this process?
10) How would the coaching process have been different if you didn't know this teacher as well?
11) How would the coaching process have been different if you were this teacher's administrator?
12) How do you think veteran teachers would react to a school leader who wanted to coach them?
13) What role does content knowledge have in terms of coaching a teacher?
14) What is the purpose of the pre-conference?
15) What is the purpose of a coaching process for the teacher?
16) What is the purpose of a coaching process for the administrator?
17) How realistic is a coaching process like this for a school site made up of multiple teachers?
18) What role did the overall coaching process have on your development as a school leader?
19) How did this coaching process meet or not meet your expectations coming into the semester?
20) Do you feel that you were adequately prepared for this coaching?
21) What could have helped prepare you better?
22) How does this coaching process fit with your other experiences and learning in the ELDA program?
23) What role should learning about coaching have in the ELDA program?
24) What changes would you make to the course to help students better develop their coaching skills?
25) Let's say that you are a school site principal and I am a new VP working under you. You want me to help coach some of the teachers on the staff, but I don't know what I'm doing. What should I do to be a good coach for the teachers?